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EDUCATION IN THE ARMY

LORD GORELL'S promised motion on Army Education was deferred, but a letter from the Master of Balliol in the *Times* has called attention to the lamentable facts and suggested the lines along which reconstruction should take place. At the outbreak of war the Army Education Corps was disbanded, and a new and promising scheme for Adult Education in the Militia was scrapped. To-day, apart from a few local experiments by voluntary organisations, the Army is entirely without educational facilities. This is more extraordinary and deplorable to-day when the soldiers have a great deal of time on their hands and when the standard of intelligence in the Army is far higher than ever before and the demand for the opportunity of serious study, as the books read among the troops show, quite unprecedented.

Behind the scenes a great deal of useful preliminary work has been done. A Central Advisory Council for Adult Education in His Majesty's Forces has been established. This body will be the "contact" between the Board of Education, the Universities and the Science Departments; and, if its scheme is adopted by Mr. Stanley, a series of regional committees, working through experienced bodies like the W.E.A., will provide to men in the forces classes and single lectures of the standard and variety of interests which they were able to obtain in civilian life. The possibilities of such a scheme are enormous.

Until the last war the Army schoolmasters and schoolmistresses, appointed originally under an order of 1811, had provided a primitive form of elementary education to soldiers and soldiers' children alike, and that was all. But the citizen army of 1914-1918 demanded something more, and on September 24th, 1918, as the result of experiments inspired by A. L. Smith, Master of Balliol, and the Y.M.C.A. University Committee, an Army Order was made providing a complete plan for a modern educational system. This lapsed with the coming of peace, and the Army Education Corps, which was founded in 1920, soon fell away from the ideals of Lord Gorell and became more and more like the old corps of Army schoolmasters. It seems to us that, although the Education Corps must eventually be revived, the first task is to persuade the War Office to co-operate, not only with grants but with enthusiasm, in the voluntary scheme. Only then, when modern educational ideas have rooted themselves, will it be time to attempt the reconstruction of the Corps itself. Its disappearance last September will have been no bad thing, if it can be rebuilt upon new and more inspiring lines.

Two Kinds of Volunteers

Mr. Pritt's question, invoking the Foreign Enlistment Act against volunteers for Finland, will lead to the regularisation of their status by a general licence. We recall with some bitterness the totally different attitude of this Government towards the men who volunteered to defend democracy in Spain against Fascist invaders. They had to creep out of the country with the police lying in wait for them, and latterly (when the French followed a parallel policy) to climb the Pyrenees like smugglers. The volunteers of to-day, for whom we all feel sympathy and admiration, are favoured by this government, not because they are defending a liberal democracy, but because they will fight the Reds. Meanwhile, in the invaded country the Russian frontal attacks on the Mannerheim line continue with great vehemence and a total disregard for life. The Finns may not be exaggerating wildly when they estimate that in thirteen days the Russians have lost 30,000 men. They lost by their own accounts 20,000 men in storming Wrangel's line in the Crimea in 1920. It is reckoned that they have 300,000 men on this front, and indefinite reserves. There cannot be much doubt that they have made a dent in the line. They claim to have taken 79 concrete "fortifications," meaning subterranean pill-boxes and machine-gun nests. Some losses the Finns now admit. In itself this is not serious, since the line is ten miles deep, but it compels the Finns to counter-attack and in such efforts they may lose as heavily as the Russians. Other fronts are fairly quiet, though the Finns report local successes. Gallant and skilful as their defence is, the strain on their limited man-power is excessive and may become unendurable.

A Bad Deal

The agreement which the Government has made with the railway companies assuredly needs much more convincing explanation than it received in the course of Tuesday's debate in the House. Under the agreement, the main-line railways have been allowed to ignore the relatively bad year 1938 in computing their basic profits, and have thus been allowed more than £7 millions above their 1938 revenue as a guaranteed profit under war conditions. If profits actually exceed this basic sum, the companies are to retain the next £3,500,000 earned, and are thereafter to get 50 per cent. of any further profits up to a total of £68,500,000. Only above this very high level does the State take the excess. As the railways are for the war period practically relieved from road competition and indeed assured of a curtailment of road services, and as the Government is to make payment for their services in carrying passengers and goods on public account, there appears to be every prospect of a handsome war bonus accruing to the shareholders. The appreciation of railway stocks is sufficient evidence that this is the view taken in the City; and one of the things left unexplained on Tuesday is how the views of the coming agreement were allowed to leak out in advance, so as to present speculators with large illegitimate profits based on private information of the coming deal. This is nearly the first case in which the curtain has been lifted on the financial transactions of the Government with big capitalist interests. If it is a fair sample, Sir John Simon can hardly expect the Trade Unions to take seriously his requests to refrain from asking for wage advances except in case of sheer necessity.

The Labour Case

To some extent the Labour Party made it easy for the Government to avoid answering the critics of the railway agreement by tabling a motion demanding the national ownership and co-ordination of all transport services instead of confining the debate to the terms of this indefensible bargain. Nevertheless, the case brought forward by Mr. Herbert Morrison in favour of outright nationalisation at any rate of the railways was unanswerable. It would be infinitely preferable from the standpoint of war efficiency, and not in the least more difficult from the standpoint of financial adjustment, to take over the railways once and for all than to strike a temporary bargain for their wartime use, and leave all to be done again when the question of their post-war operation has to be faced. There is a stronger case against the immediate socialisation of all road transport, because of the much greater complication of the problems involved in the transfers; but here too the arguments in favour of public requisition have very great force, in view of the virtual control involved in petrol rationing and the power to requisition vehicles, and of the need for close co-ordination between road and rail services under the existing condition of deficient facilities for both forms of transport. The Government, however, was at hardly more pains to answer the Labour Party's case for socialisation than to put forward any reasoned defence of its deal with the companies. It simply voted down the Labour motion, in the sacred names of property rights and the vital interests of private capitalism.

Return to School

It is a pity that the President of the Board of Education in his speech last week slurred over the cardinal points of the Circular on the subject of compulsory attendance at school. By so doing he raised doubts whether the Government really intends to carry out even the cautious policy outlined in the Circular. This argues roundly that since there is still a danger of air-attacks, compulsory attendance can only be enforced if parents are given another chance to evacuate their children. It objects to the almost complete cessation of infant education in some neutral areas, urges the local authorities to provide half-time education for all children at once—the President gave the beginning of April as an acceptable final date—and looks forward to a resumption of full-time attendance at the earliest opportunity. There are two weaknesses in this policy. In the first place, the President should at once fix a date for the resumption of full-time attendance, and press especially strongly the case for the infants who suffer more from half-time work and exclusion from the school buildings. In the second place, he might well pay more attention to the problems of the reception areas. In the debate the Archbishop of York took up the plea of the W.E.A. for the appointment of a committee to take evidence on the spot and report on ways of avoiding the errors of the last evacuation, if another exodus should become necessary. This is an excellent suggestion. There are a host of problems about the present evacuation which such a committee could also tackle.

The Borders Case

On January 29th the Court of Appeal delivered judgment in the "Borders Case." The only issue of importance to the vast public of small house purchasers was whether

Building Societies can be made responsible in damages for fraudulent advertising carried on by speculative builders with whom they are associated in the development of a "building estate." To a layman it seems fantastic that a Building Society, engaged in what is really a business partnership with a builder, should be able to stand by and take the benefit of the builder's advertising without its burden. Yet that was the contention not only of the Bradford Third Equitable, but of every Building Society in the country. *Caveat emptor;* and, if there has been fraud, let the purchaser sue the builder (who in such cases is generally bankrupt)—a disquieting argument when it is remembered that persons purchasing through Building Societies rarely have the money to pay a surveyor of their own, or any notion of the grisly things that an attractive stucco may conceal; and in any event are almost invariably, *to the Society's knowledge*, led to believe that the mere fact of the Society making an advance is sufficient guarantee that the security is good, the house well built. The Court of Appeal has vindicated the common sense view. Mrs. Borders' victory is the victory of thousands of defrauded house purchasers, now engaged on "mortgage strike" to compel Building Societies to do the honourable thing.

By-Elections

Only 24 per cent. of the electorate recorded their votes at the Southwark by-election. The *Daily Herald*, however, may well be right in estimating that this was really a 40 per cent. poll, since thousands of voters had been evacuated or were on some form of service and prevented from voting. As it was, the Labour candidate came in comfortably, with Mr. Searson on a Stop the War appeal obtaining 1,500 votes, and Mrs. Van der Elst securing nearly as many on her curiously personal candidature. Presumably the majority of the voters thought the issue unreal; they would all like to stop the war if they could, but are not prepared to stop it on Hitler's terms. Silvertown, where there is a by-election because Jack Jones has retired from politics, promises a livelier fight. Alderman Hollins, the Labour candidate, will be opposed by Mr. Harry Pollitt for the Communists, and also apparently by a Fascist candidate. In that case there will be two Stop the War candidates. Mr. Pollitt is the most forcible spokesman of Communism in this country. No one has so eloquently and bitterly denounced those who were prepared to make any kind of deal with Hitler before Stalin came to terms with the Nazis. Those who share Mr. Pollitt's doubts about the objects and possible results of the war, hope that he will use the opportunity of this election to tell us in plain language on what terms he now advocates peace with Hitler.

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The Week in Parliament

From Our Parliamentary Correspondent.—We have had a mixed week in the House of Commons, ranging from food prices to the salary of Lord Hankey. For example, last Wednesday Mr. Hudson moved to approve the new Clearing Agreement with Turkey. Boiled down it amounts to another £2 millions—over and above the £35 millions already provided by France and this country. The House swallowed this comparatively small gnat quite cheerfully, although Mr. Price mildly suggested that it could not be regarded as a purely commercial transaction.

We then moved on to Chatham House, concerning which Members on both sides were plainly uneasy. Dr. Dalton's complaint that during this war too many people have been writing memoranda found a responsive echo in the hearts of an audience which is afflicted with this particular blight every morning at breakfast. It amounts, as he truly said, to a form of escapism. Sir Stanley Reed made a powerful plea for a more comprehensive and less chaotic organisation in the field of information and propaganda generally. He was, he said, "staggered" by the array of professional talent and professorial salaries—and added that there was now hardly a department where one did not find a large and costly body, armed with scissors and marshes of paste, producing summaries of the foreign press. It is, of course, the same old story. One organisation in charge of news, another in charge of propaganda in neutral countries, a third (very secret) in charge of enemy propaganda: "add the B.B.C., Chatham House and the British Council to the mixture, and stir." Nevertheless, the vote was agreed to without a division.

On Thursday we had an extremely interesting debate on food prices. Mr. Alexander opened with a mass of detailed and valuable first-hand information. He asked many searching questions with regard to the price of various articles of food since the outbreak of war, and Government purchases thereof. But he did not touch upon one aspect of the question which is fundamental, and that is the fantastic disparity in this country between wholesale and retail prices. It is a source of amazement to foreigners now resident here that, in time of war, we should continue to tolerate a rake-off of 33⅓ per cent. for the retailer—and only goes to prove what a tremendous hold this class still retains upon our political and economic life. Sir John Simon made out an unanswerable case for the general policy of subsidising foodstuffs in order to keep down prices at this juncture. He gave some interesting figures. We are spending £480,000 a week on wheat, £235,000 on milk, £320,000 on home-grown meat, and £80,000 on bacon. But he failed to convince the House that this is, as it should be, merely part of a comprehensive and carefully planned economic policy.

The new Member for Streatham, Mr. Robertson, interested the House with a number of revolutionary theories about the conduct of the fishing industry; and Mr. Macmillan gave a succinct analysis of the major financial problems which now confront the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Mr. Garro Jones, one of the liveliest of the younger Labour Members, made a most successful front-bench debut; and Mr. W. S. Morrison, who looks rather wan these days, wound up as best he could.

The Labour demand for nationalisation of the railways on Tuesday led inevitably to a somewhat academic debate. Mr. Herbert Morrison was less facetious, and in consequence much more effective, than he was in the debate on economic co-ordination. But the result was a foregone conclusion. Underlying most of the speeches was an uneasiness about the undoubted leakage of information which led to a most unhealthy and undesirable speculative boom on the Stock Exchange during recent weeks. The personal integrity of Lord Stamp is not open to doubt, and no breath of suspicion is directed against him in any quarter. But the feeling is widespread, and growing, that his present position as Chief Economic Adviser to the Government is not compatible with the Chairmanship of the L.M.S. Railway.

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A NEW DEAL FOR EUROPE

THIS is a war of bitter reminiscence, and inevitably when Mr. Roosevelt sends Mr. Sumner Welles to Europe, we recall the mission of Colonel House and its sequel. The suggestion is a dangerous one with which to toy: nothing in this war may mislead us so often as the belief that history repeats itself. This is not yet what the last became, a world war. Americans, moreover, reacted in their own way to the disillusionment that followed Versailles. We said instinctively, "No More War." What they said was "No more Europe." The wise course in this case is to believe what we are told. The mission of this experienced permanent official, who has a talent for courteous silence, is to listen, observe and report. One reason for sending him to Europe at this time may be that none of America's ambassadors to the belligerent capitals is at the moment at his post. But few of us are content to restrict our imaginations to this literal answer. Conceivably, we tell ourselves, Mr. Welles's report might lead to early action. It may be significant that while he talks with the Duce, another Envoy Extraordinary, Mr. Myron Taylor, will present his credentials to the Pope, who may have had the ambition to mediate, though he has deferred whatever action he contemplated. Naturally enough, there are neutrals, both in America and Europe, who urge that some form of mediation should be attempted before this merciful winter ceases to impose its partial truce.

The broad fact, as we see it, is that so great a Power as the United States cannot act in such a war as this as a mere postman between the belligerents. That is a service a minor neutral might assume. If ever America offers her services to promote peace, it will be as a mediator who comes upon the scene with all the prestige of economic and naval power. The responsibility is one which no American President dare lightly assume, even if he be what Mr. Roosevelt is, a man of action with a generous international outlook. He is the strongest and most magnetic leader that America has had for several decades, and the available evidence goes to show that his popularity with the mass of citizens is undiminished. But his hold over both Houses of Congress has become precarious: a strong faction of his own party is against him, while some of the Republican progressives who warmly support the New Deal are rigid isolationists. The dread of war and of "involvement" in European affairs is so tyrannous over wide circles of American opinion that these tend to veto any action, however pacific, be it in Europe or the Far East. There is no doubt, as the President said the other day, that ninety-eight Americans in every hundred sympathise warmly with the Finns, yet a minority in Congress saw the hidden hand of warlike intervention in the proposal now adopted to grant them a loan for the purchase of foodstuffs. This caution is greatly intensified by the approach of the presidential elections. Every fourth year is a close season in American politics, during which no Congressman dare do anything that any section of the electors might criticise. Even Mr. Roosevelt is playing for safety with a cautious and economical domestic programme, which has only one outstanding item, an immense increase in the appropriations for defence. As we read American opinion it is hostile to the Nazis rather than positively friendly to the Western Allies. Liberals find it difficult to forgive Mr. Chamberlain and M. Daladier for Munich. We have missed our chance by reconciling India, to place ourselves before Americans in a more sympathetic posture. The average man finds little to interest him in this monotonous war of endurance, and all his sympathies are absorbed by the Finns, who pay their debts and furnish a superb gladiatorial spectacle. Russia, for reasons that spring rather from the class instinct than from morals, has outdistanced Germany as an object of abhorrence, though as yet she has done nothing remotely comparable in its barbarity to Hitler's policy of extermination against Poles and Jews. The President denounced her with justice the other day for her aggression, but he is the last man to lose balance and perspective as many propertied Americans are doing.

This tendency to focus indignation especially upon the "red" aggressor may have no grave consequences when Americans indulge it, save that innocent men and women of the Left will have to pay for Stalin's scarlet sins; but it may lead us into perils to which the sentimentalists of the Right are blind. Stalin at present prowls on the edges of Hitler's camp, foraging for himself and paying for this privilege by the grudging and unpunctual delivery of supplies, which as yet reach a far from impressive total. It is easy from this to leap to the conclusion that Russia is now the ally of Germany and, on the basis of greatly exaggerated ideas of Soviet military weakness, to argue that it is easier to win victories on Russian than on German fronts. How far is this argument for spreading the war dictated by cool calculation of strategy and how far is it due to hatred of Bolshevism combined with a proper sympathy for the Finns, who certainly need and deserve all the help which we can give them?

No more difficult problem ever confronted us. We are all desperately anxious for the Finns to preserve their independence, but how far is it wise to send not only weapons and aeroplanes but also volunteers, who are likely to be too few effectively to help the Finns and who may well become an isolated force, whose support and reinforcement will be an increasing drain that may prove perilous and exhausting? Shall we not by such help finally cement the alliance between Stalin and Hitler and create a solid Totalitarian block stretching from Cologne to Vladivostock? In the same way we may feel doubts about the future of the great army now being assembled in Syria. This army is primarily a strategic reserve to cover the oilfields of the Middle East. Its presence may deter the enemy from attacking, but the temptations of using this powerful instrument for an aggressive enterprise in a field in which it will enjoy a unique freedom of movement may wear down the prudence of statesmen biased by the attitude of their class. We do not wish to render Hitler the service of making Stalin an active belligerent on his side. The psychological effects in this country and in France of war with Russia are not to be forgotten. These extremely difficult problems can only be solved if we remember always that it is Hitler and not Stalin who is a menace to Britain and France and that our job is to achieve security here, not to attempt the impossible task of imposing Western conceptions of government and economics upon the whole Asiatic and European continents.

With this anxious perspective before us, it is only natural that we should speculate on the report that

Mr. Sumner Welles will make to Washington. It is to be hoped that he will not confine himself to the political problems of Europe, which taken alone may well seem insoluble. If he examines the economic factors he may find more hopeful channels of investigation.

In all the belligerent countries the return to civilian life may seem so perilous and so difficult that the dread of it may even prolong the war. Beside idle machines, demobilised men even among the victors, if victors there be, will face poverty with rifles in their hands. They may find constructive leadership which will know how to use their fears and anger for the cause of freedom. It is not too soon to begin to consider how we shall provide both for our own people and for the workers now under the enemy's flag. No Fourteen Points nor yet the Rights of Man will interest the starving veterans beside cold forges and silent guns. They will want bread and work. The best offer we could make, to win the German masses for democracy and peace, would be that they shall share with us in honest manual work to build a world with "living space" for all. Technically it can be done. Protocols and charters and treaties the world must have, but it will need bridges and rails, tractors and ploughs. The worst sin of the men of Versailles was not that they drew some doubtful frontiers; it was that they forgot economics. The first chapter in our peace settlement, if we could influence its drafting, will be an ambitious plan of public works, development and restoration, that will employ the West to lift the East above its poverty. But that may need American help. Will Mr. Roosevelt have the daring to propose an international New Deal? There are Tennessee Valleys in the Old World also.

WHAT CAN WE OFFER GERMANY?

SINCE I wrote on French security, a few weeks ago, the Labour Party has published its admirable declaration on War and Peace and declared its conviction that the aim of the peacemaker must be to reconcile the claims of French security and German equality. Naturally it was impossible within the limits of a short manifesto to give more than the barest outline of the place which Germany should have in an ordered Europe. In this article, I want to analyse more fully the German claim to equality and to indicate the sort of appeal which could be made to Germany now.

But first, one word of criticism. The Labour Declaration repeatedly suggests that we can only negotiate peace with a different German Government. This may well be an accurate statement of fact, but I doubt if it is a wise piece of diplomacy. It may be better to lay down our terms of peace and leave it to our enemies to consider them. We must take warning from President Wilson and refuse to dictate to the German people the form of government they must adopt; and, more important still, we must at all costs avoid the mistake of making an anti-Nazi Government in Germany accept responsibility for defeat. It should be one of our major objectives to ensure that those in Germany, who are responsible for the war, should admit the defeat of their plans; and that the German people should see clearly this time that it is the forces of aggression, not a stab in the back which have been their undoing. We can leave it to the Germans to draw the revolutionary consequences, if the Nazis are compelled to accept the conditions of European security outlined in my previous article.

The Labour declaration rightly implies that no peace can be lasting which denies to the German people that national unity on which British and French civilisation are based. You can no more abolish nationalism than you can abolish power; and the more you suppress nationalism, the more aggressive it becomes. The great creative achievement of Hitler has been to substitute for the artificial, and Prussian, compromise of Bismarck a genuine unification of Germany. The destruction of the *Länder* is, I believe, permanent in the sense that its revocation by a victorious enemy or, even worse, by a violent anti-Nazi reaction inside Germany would merely create the conditions for another nationalist revolution; and the fall of the Nazis would no more affect this fundamental unification than the fall of Stalin would mean the return of capitalism in the U.S.S.R. To encourage separatist movements or to seize the Rhine provinces might be a tempting expedient, but it would be as impermanent as the restoration of the Bourbons after the fall of Napoleon.

This does not, however, mean that we must accept either the centralised regimentation which the Nazis have imposed upon Germany proper or the Pan-German expansion of the Reich to include Austro- and Bohemian Germans. Unlike the French, German civilisation has always been connected with a strong tradition of communal self-government and centred round not one capital but two; and the problem of German politics has been to preserve communal self-government without slipping into separatism, to build a central authority without slipping into subordination to a militarised Government. Since the second Reich was little more than the conquest of Germany by the Prussian army, the Nazi subordination of the army to the State is a progressive step in so far as it has destroyed the basis of Prussian particularism and Junker domination. The German claim to equality can only be satisfied if the Nazi despotism is replaced, not by the old powers of Prussian militarism and Austrian Monarchism, but by a *Rechtsstaat* based on the principle of German federation. And this means that the restoration of a centralised parliamentary system is far less important to German liberty than the restoration of a proper equilibrium between Federal unity and communal self-government.

In the second place, the German claim to equality must not be permitted to override the claims of other central European peoples. To grant a security to Germany which creates a permanent insecurity in the Danube basin is not to remedy the ills of Versailles but to overlook one of the few achievements of the last war. It is foolish—and impossible—to attempt the recreation of Poland, Czechoslovakia or Austria as they were in 1933: but it would be equally foolish, though possible, to leave them under the threat of a revival of Pan-German aggression. The small "nationalities-state," with its theory of racial equilibrium and its practice of racial rivalry and dependence upon the finances and armies of the Western Powers, was a bastard form of democracy, and an anachronism even when it was first created. If Germans are to enjoy equality not predominance in Central Europe, not only Germany but the Danube basin must be reconstructed upon a federal basis. When we make our offer of equality to the German people, these things should be said clearly and without any chance of misunderstanding.

But, it will be asked, if you admit the German claim to unity even in this limited form, how can you reconcile it with the needs of French and British security? To rely on the permanent one-sided demilitarisation of Germany is futile. Let France take the Rhine provinces and within a generation German skill will have created a new menace behind the Rhine. Abolish military service in Germany, and you sow the seeds of a new militarism. The only long-term solution is the creation by the Western democracies of social and economic *Lebensraum* not for Germany but for the energies and talents of the German people. What we need, both for propaganda during the war and for reconstruction after the war, is a democratic vision of a new social order in Europe and in our Empires outside Europe as clear as the vision of Racial Imperialism in *Mein Kampf*. Before we can offer anything to Germany, we must know how we are going to put our own house in order, and achieve social security for our own peoples: and in solving our own problems of unemployment and colonial exploitation,

we shall find that we have discovered our message to Germany. Abolish the threat of chronic unemployment and you will have abolished the popular basis of German racialism: show how German industry can enjoy prosperity without rearmament and no German worker will accept the starvation wages of a *Herrenvolk* pursuing the mirage of a closed imperialism.

We have reached the central problem of our war-aims. The *Daily Telegraph* dismissed the Labour plan for a reconstruction of European economy as a Utopian irrelevancy: in fact it is essential not only to winning the peace but to winning the war. Victory by old-fashioned military means or by old-fashioned blockade is almost impossible for either side. There are only two alternatives: (1) That both sides build up in the areas they control and with which they trade a war-economy of closed imperialism. In this case, when both sides have cut their consumption to the bone, a stalemate is probable. (2) That we should refuse to imitate the Nazi slave-economy and, on the basis of the Anglo-French co-operation, turn our restrictive cartel and monopoly economy into an expanding consumption economy, raise the purchasing-power of the raw material countries within and outside our empires, and, by enriching our area of the world as a whole, lighten the burden of war upon our own peoples. Labour's proposals, I suggest, should be pressed, not merely as measures of post-war reconstruction but as an immediate programme of war-aims. Instead of trying *first* to win the war and *then* to solve the problem of social security, we must realise that, in order to win, we must now, while the war is on, lay the foundations of a new social order. That is the only way to victory, in any real meaning of that word.

The Nazis have mobilised the economic life of Germany: by disobeying the rules of academic economists and the policies of orthodox bankers, they have brought their financial and industrial system under public control: though what they plan *for* is monstrous, they have like the Russians a planned economy, while we, under stress of war, are still floundering in a compromise between monopoly capitalism and Nazi war-finance.

There are, however, two fatal defects in Nazi economics. In the first place, it has destroyed those democratic controls on planning without which efficiency is bound to turn into exploitation: in the second place, they sooner or later subordinate their neighbours to their industrial interests and turn them into economic colonies: German industry alone retains the privileges of the metropolitan nation and accepts as partners only the primary countries or alternatively (as in Czechoslovakia) tries to degrade an advanced country to this status. Thus the extension of Nazi imperialism brings with it not the expansion but the contraction of purchasing power. In this sense it is the final stage of monopoly organisation, perpetuating the distinction between the privileged classes and peoples and the unprivileged in a rigid caste form.

The struggle against this closed empire can take two forms. We may turn our liberal capitalist empires into imitations of the Nazi system. If that is our policy, then we can have no message for the German peoples. There is no reason why Germans should prefer an Anglo-French closed imperialism to Hitler's: indeed, there is every reason for them to fight to the last ditch against it. There is, however, a second way of organising the war. We can learn from the Germans that the public control of finance, of exports and imports and of industrial development is necessary to any modern economy, whether in peace or war, but we can decide to use that control not for the maintenance of profits in face of declining consumption, but for the creation of purchasing power in our empires and outside. Instead of bemoaning the size of the budget and axe-ing all schemes of colonial development, we can say: "Now, for our sins, we are mobilising our wealth for destructive tasks: when the war is over, the colossal economic weapon we shall have created will be switched from the destruction of Nazi tyranny to the reconstruction of Europe. We shall be poor in the old capitalist sense of the word, but as long as there are millions in Germany, in Central Europe, in our empires who need houses, roads, light industries, social services, education, there will be work for us all to do and though we may dismantle some of our arms factories and armies, we shall never dismantle this great machine of international economic co-operation till we have created prosperity." This war has forced us to mobilise wealth and labour: but our real war is not against Germany but against the social insecurity which gave Hitler his chance of power.

I shall be told that such a plan is Utopian. But what is the alternative? Are we to construct a closed imperialism to fight the Nazis, or even worse, are we to pretend that our present chaotic economics are a Christian civilisation worth defending? Neither of these objectives will inspire 99 per cent. of Frenchmen or Englishmen, let alone provide Germans with any alternative to a loyal acceptance of Hitler. We can only secure ourselves against German imperialism and give justice to the German people by laying the foundations while the war is on of a genuine international democracy. That foundation is the organisation of wealth and work for social welfare, the creation of a *Lebensraum* for the peoples of Europe and our empires and the building of a *Gemeinschaft der Völker*. With that vision we can confront and conquer the vision of *Mein Kampf*: without it, we may (though this is unlikely) win the war, we shall certainly lose the peace.

R. H. S. CROSSMAN

A LONDON DIARY

"So they're getting volunteers for Finland, are they?" said my friend, who was a sergeant-major in the last war. "Well, I know all about volunteering in the Army. I was a volunteer myself three times in the last spot of bother. The first time we were drafted to Glasgow because of labour troubles. I was in a tank, and you should have seen the square empty as we galumphed round. Then I went back to barracks and found that I had earned six days' leave for volunteering—which was the first I knew about it. Then we turned up in Aldershot; we were to look after some unrest at Nine Elms. Yet who was more surprised than I to find afterwards that I had earned more special leave as a volunteer? The third time, all sorts of preparations were made. We didn't know where we were going, but we had special kit and blue stars sewn on to our uniforms, and when everything was ready, and we should have got in properly wrong if we made a fuss, we were given papers to sign, and the next thing we knew, we found ourselves at Archangel! I wonder whether volunteering *from the Army* has really changed much in the last twenty years?"

* * *

I notice in the *Towncrier*, the Birmingham Labour weekly, a report which bears out what I said a fortnight ago about the impotence of most Watch Committees. A Labour Alderman complained in Council of police interference at a factory gate meeting and suggested that the employers had warned the police in advance of the meeting. The facts do not seem to be in dispute. When the Trade-Union leaders arrived at the pitch, they found car-loads of police there who firmly forbade the meeting, though the place chosen was well away from the traffic and the speakers were Trade-Union Officials of eminent respectability. But it is the reply of the chairman of the Watch Committee which is really interesting. Admitting that the employers might have got the police there, he said that it was not the job of his committee to tell the police how to do their duty. The implications of this statement are pretty serious. It means that in Birmingham the chief constable, provided that he stands well with the Home Office, is a dictator in the whole sphere of Civil Liberties and answerable to no one. Questions in the House are the only way of getting at him. It means further that the Birmingham Watch Committee is just a façade of democracy to hide this Police Dictatorship. This only increases my pleasure at the determina-

tion of the Stoke-on-Trent Watch Committee and Council to resist this encroachment by the Executive on the duties of the elected Councillors.

* * *

I happened to be present this week-end at a meeting of a small, and by no means Left-wing, Labour Party when the letter from the National Executive dealing with the electoral truce was discussed. It was the first chance that these people had had of knowing the terms of the agreement which had been privately made between the three parties at the beginning of the war, and the discussion was both sensible and exceedingly confused. While the chairman read out the long list of difficulties—an old register, soldiers away on active service, black-out, overtime—in the way of fighting by-elections, everyone listened patiently. But when he reached the paragraph which argues that the weakness of the local parties is a reason for continuing the truce, there was general indignation. Member after member asked whether the Executive realised that it was the Truce which was killing local parties. How could you persuade people to subscribe and work for an organisation whose chief reason for existence had been undermined? There was bewilderment also at the discovery that, whereas in one section the Executive states that it seeks to "secure an independent Labour Government at the first opportunity" the letter ends with an appeal that "members should stand loyally by the Party, and prepare to shoulder the responsibilities that will fall upon all of us *when the guns have ceased to fire*." Does this mean that the truce *is* for the duration and that the Executive thinks that it can halt the party during the war and then expect it to march into action on the day peace is signed? This is a question which worries not only Communists, who, the Executive implies, are the sole cause of the demand for breaking the truce, but loyal Party Members.

* * *

The Union of Democratic Control (34 Victoria St., S.W.1) publishes this week, at the cost of 4d., a remarkably impartial and objective summary of Finnish history and of the whole background of the Soviet-Finnish war. I have checked up its account of the events of 1918-19 by re-reading the memoirs of Von der Goltz, the German general who was sent, in response to the invitation of the Finnish Whites, to help defeat the Reds in a lightning campaign in April, 1918. Von der Goltz, whose later exploits in the Baltic are better known, was a highly indiscreet political general, and much of what he says makes fascinating reading to-day. He explains that the success of Bolshevism in Finland, where only the sparsely populated north remained loyal to the Whites, was chiefly due to the unsatisfactory conditions of the tenant farmers who wanted to own their land; he admits the technical skill of the Russian officers who controlled the Red Army, and states that the "Red" Finnish Revolution was not accompanied by any terror or atrocities comparable with those he saw later in the Baltic (he discreetly covers up the appalling White Terror which followed). The battle of Lahti, in which he routed a huge Red Army, capturing 25,000 prisoners, was won by the same sort of encircling movement which the Finns are now using against the Russians. Commenting on this operation, Von der Goltz remarks: "This movement can only be conceived and carried out by generals and troops of higher quality in sparsely populated land with few roads and long lines of communication, against an enemy column well equipped but disheartened and a little out of hand. A Finnish General Staff of the future may draw valuable conclusions from it." I found his references to Mannerheim especially interesting. From the first Mannerheim played the role of the Finnish Pilsudski: he wanted help from no one, hated all his allies and preferred the Entente because it was farther off. It was against his advice that the German Army was invited and in May, 1918, he resigned in protest against the pro-German policy of the Government, which had agreed to hand over the complete training and control of the new Finnish Army to German officers and to accept a Hohenzollern as King. Mannerheim saw that the Germans were trying to come to terms with the Bolsheviks and feared that a German-Russian understanding would threaten Finnish independence. So he became more and more in favour of collaboration with the Entente in an attack on Russia. Von der Goltz obviously was impressed by Finland and constantly warns his German readers that its democratic culture is entirely different from that of the Baltic States and must be respected by any Government which wants friendship with Finland. Speaking to Russian monarchists, he said: "When Russia recovers, it would not be at all clever to make any moves against Finnish independence. Russia can live quite well without Finland and would only make an Ireland out of her, especially as Finland possesses a real political unity and a genuine culture entirely alien to the Russian." When I had finished reading, I was clearer than ever that Finland cannot be fitted into any simple war of ideologies. The Finns are fighting neither for capitalism nor for Christianity, but for an old-fashioned patriotism, and Mannerheim is first and foremost an anti-Bolshevik and secondly an astute Finnish Nationalist.

* * *

John Buchan wrote some of the best thrillers ever published in English and some of the best popular historical biographies. Some of his books sold by the hundred thousand, but, like some greater men, he always hankered after success in spheres not suited to his talents. Just as Cicero wanted to write poetry, so John Buchan wanted to be a statesman. He was obsessed with the idea of greatness; his heroes were Montrose, Oliver Cromwell and Augustus Caesar. Those who knew him well tell me that he had no political gifts of any kind. As a result his achievements were mainly ceremonial. When he was Lord High Commissioner of the Church of Scotland he wore splendid robes, and was radiantly happy in their magnificence. The House of Commons led him not to Cabinet Office, but to the Governor-Generalship of Canada. Here was the perfect honorific post. If one cannot achieve real political greatness, to be the King's representative is surely the best possible substitute. But Lord Tweedsmuir will be remembered as the John Buchan who wrote *The Thirty-Nine Steps*.

* * *

Verses on the Eminent are very popular just now. A correspondent sends me the following epigram on a Field-Marshal:

> Guns-instead-of-butter Göring
> Has a charming way of purring;
> Tigers, too, are very sweet
> Unless it's you they mean to eat.

I recommend the composition of such rhymes as a pleasurable mental exercise in unlighted trains or buses. One's personal friends, by the way, are just as satisfactory subjects of malice as the most eminent public figures. CRITIC

THE NEW INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

WHEN at the British Association some years ago the challenge was thrown out that scientific discoveries and inventions were being strangled at birth or bought up and suppressed by the big industrial interests, Lord Stamp was counsel for the defence. He argued, most persuasively, that a big industrial interest had to decide whether it was "economic" to introduce a new discovery or a new process before the existing ones were obsolete and whether it was not better to "put them in the ice-box."

But, as I asked at the time, "Who was to hold the key to the ice-box? Was it to be the worker who would be displaced if the industry discovered that a new process was 'economic' because it employed less labour? Or was it to be the public who would gain by the new discovery? Or was it to be those who were making profits out of the old process so long as it had no competitor?"

For instance, was the delay in introducing the Welsbach

mantle entirely divorced from the fact that the gas companies knew that the old rat-tail jets burned more gas? And has the non-appearance of the household mercury-vapour lamp, a perfect specimen of which I handled in a laboratory four or five years ago, anything to do with its extremely low consumption of electricity or, from the point of view of the Lamp Ring, its incalculable longevity?

Or take the zip-fastener, the first patents of which were registered in Chicago in 1879. It was brought out, an improved version, it is true, by Nobel Explosives in 1911 and did not become really commercial until after the war. Is my mind warped with the suspicion that the button manufacturers had a definite interest in the delay?

I have a pet corn which I call "Henry Brassert." It is a souvenir of the time when I marched for the best part of a month with the Men of Jarrow, and Ellen Wilkinson. One of the reasons for that march was the "Brassert Report" which chose Jarrow as the ideal site for a modern steel plant, only to be blocked by the Iron and Steel Federation.

Hence I have a painful interest in Henry Brassert the American steel consultant, who came to this country in 1918 with a project for manufacturing steel from native British iron ore. Native ore has a high sulphur content and Brassert's process provided the means of getting rid of that deleterious sulphur. No one was interested for years. Perhaps it was the enormous amount of bicarbonate of soda required for the cleansing which turned it a few years ago into the "I.C.I.-Brassert Process." Anyway, my corn has been even more painful since, following the Jarrow march, I discovered that the Brassert Process is the secret of the Hermann Göring Iron Works, which using native German ore, has made it possible to increase German steel production from nineteen million tons a year to at least twenty-three and a half million tons a year.

Still probing that "ice-box," without a search-warrant, I am curious about "Nylon." Nylon has beaten the silkworm. It is the super-substitute for silk, which was produced by the Du Pont Corporation in America. Crudely expressed, it consists of coal, air and water. It can be formed into fibres one-seventy-fifth the thickness of natural silk, is 50 per cent. stronger ("As strong as steel," the Americans say), takes dyes easily and has an elasticity unequalled by real silk. It can be used for hosiery, sewing thread, knit-wear, "unmentionables," dresses, velvet and, in its thicker forms, for tooth-brush bristles, fishing lines and transparent wrappings.

Eighteen months ago, at least, Du Ponts were sufficiently satisfied with it to lay down a £2,000,000 "pilot plant" to produce it on a commercial scale.

Since Imperial Chemical Industries have collateral patents with Du Pont, one expected that immediate development would have taken place in this country. One of the reasons given for delay in following up Nylon was that the product would be prohibitively expensive. Which surprised me, because one of the reasons for American jubilation over the discovery was that it would "knock the bottom out of the Japanese market."

A few months ago it was announced that Courtaulds and I.C.I. had joined forces to develop Nylon in this country. They will be the sole providers of the yarn to other firms and the arbiters as to how soon and to what extent and at what price Nylon will become the competitor in the rayon field.

The whole story of the plastics suggests, if not the "ice-box," at least a "quick freeze." The actual as contrasted with the potential development exasperates those who see in the plastics one of the greatest scientific developments of the twentieth century. It is, no less, than the substitution of what an American has called "chemurgy" in place of metallurgy. The chemist can create materials which can replace metals and, furthermore, materials which are ideal for mass-production methods. But plastics (witness not only Nylon but rayon, which dates back to the beginning of this century) impinges upon textiles, upon pottery, upon the glass industry, upon the wood-trader and the metal interests.

For years I have been using a pair of opera-glasses made entirely from coal. The frame is of bakelite and the lenses are of transparent resin. The price is a fraction of what a pair of opera-glasses, with glass lenses of corresponding power, would cost. At the time, I was told that my spectacle lenses, which cost me, in glass, 11*s.* 6*d.* each, could be made in this material for 1½*d.* That is because, instead of grinding, the lenses would be stamped in moulds. Moulds could be made to suit an unlimited range of oculist's prescriptions so that the optician could stock them, since the price would be so small, as a shoemaker stocks shoes—only with more certainty of a dead-accurate fit. Years have passed. . . .

With the war, however, the day of the plastics has probably arrived. Even before the war the plastic which gave me, in the opera-glasses, I.C.I.-sight, was being used in the form of transparent hoods for cockpits and gun turrets in aeroplanes. The demand for propellers made of plastics is now fantastic. It is being used for an increasing number of military components.

My question, "Who holds the key to the ice-box?" finds an easy answer in wartime. . . . "The Minister for Supply." Under the pressure of wartime requirements, discoveries and processes which were carefully "ice-boxed" by competitive industries may be brought out, dusted and presented to us as brand-new.

There is, however, still a "may be," since we have never had in this country anything like a searching stocktaking such as that conducted by the U.S. Federal Communications Commission which showed that the Bell Telephone System suppressed 3,400 unused patents in order to forestall competition.

War, however, will remove the time-honoured excuse for delays in introducing new materials. . . . "There is no public demand." That is always open to question. For instance, when rayon was first put on the market, a committee appointed by the silk manufacturers to study its possibilities dismissed it as a "transient fad" and when it proved otherwise, large sums were spent on advertising to discredit it. It was only last year, more than thirty years later, that question was finally settled through the formation of the Rayon and Silk Manufacturers Association, with the silk interests as the "junior partner."

Once I had an argument with Professor Bergius, discoverer of the oil-from-coal process, who had become Director of German "Ersatz." He had been boasting of the achievements of the Germans in the self-sufficiency field, how they were making sugar and suits from wood and the strides they had made in the manufacture of "buna," the synthetic rubber and other things. I challenged him about the cost of the products and he shrugged his shoulders and admitted "Only a war-economy could justify them."

It is, however, as well to remember that the "ice-box" contains not only new discoveries and inventions but labour-saving processes, usually those which have been held up, not because of humanitarian motives but because of the lack of initial demand to justify the heavy capital outlay. Only last week one of our leading technologists told me that he estimated that, in the course of the past year, we had reached a stage in mass-production technique which would have taken us, in normal times, another ten years to achieve. And now orders have been placed for £50,000,000 worth of machine tools for British industry. Mass-production will be increasing at compound interest.

For those who are thinking in terms of the post-war world, and not primarily in terms of military production, that is of grave significance. Assuming that the war stopped to-morrow and that this enormous potential of production were switched over to peacetime objects, the convulsions it would cause in an unmanaged economy would be terrific. It is not a question of *scrapping* mass-production plant because it was intended for war needs. Modern machine tools are highly adaptable. Just as to-day a modern factory designed, say, for the production of silk hose can be switched over, in a few weeks, to the production of bomber parts, so does the reverse apply.

The same technologist estimated that the last war advanced

industrial efficiency by twenty-five years. The technique of producing shells was translated into the mass-production of motor cars, and so on.

Every new type machine tool, die or jig represents a short cut to something which has meant skilled hand effort hitherto. As production advances and there is a shortage of man-power, these short cuts will become more and more drastic, making the problem of replacing in civil employment the millions withdrawn for military or civil defence service incredibly more difficult.

This problem is fraught with such dire possibilities in terms of post-war reconstruction that it should surely be engaging much more attention than it is. I hazard a guess that even in terms of war effort it is not fully known what our real potential of production is at the moment and that no systematic survey has been made.

How much less are the Government experts concerned about the impact of the New Industrial Revolution upon the future? Where is the State Pre-vision Committee which the late Lord Rutherford demanded? RITCHIE CALDER

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of the column goes this week to Mary Annesley.

All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1.

Young lady typists were extra keen to secure some memento of the King's visit. One obtained the serviette he used, while the King's cigarette-end and the match he used to light his cigarette were secured by others. One girl, not to be outdone, poured the remains in the King's teacup into a bottle, which she took home.—*Bristol Evening Post.*

The discontinuance of first-class on the Underground is only one of several jolts to the social code which the war is giving us. Not that it matters: we can all afford to be a little more democratic for a few months, just as we change our clocks every year in the same cause.—"Observator" in the *Observer.*

I saw the Duke and Duchess of Kent enjoying themselves immensely in the informal atmosphere of Mayfair's newest entertainment.

The ballroom was rigged up to resemble a dug-out behind the lines. There were sandbags round the walls instead of armchairs and couches, and the place was lit by candles.

The Duke confessed his surprise that so much realism could be achieved.—*Daily Sketch.*

We were shocked and surprised to hear, on Sunday evening, broadcast from Paris what purports to be a new dance called "Le Chamberlain."

This dance apparently involves the use of an umbrella, and we think you will agree with us that, in times like these, our beloved Premier should be spared such exhibitions of bad taste.—Letter in the *Daily Mirror.*

BROTHERS

THERE are people who say that they cannot understand modern poetry. I doubt, however, whether the poets should be blamed for this. Born into an unintelligible age, they naturally reflect its unintelligibility in speech. Life seems to have lost its meaning over a considerable part of the earth's surface: words have certainly lost theirs. "Peace" has come to mean war, and "freedom" the right to be dictated to for twenty-four hours a day. Living-room and dying-room have become indistinguishable. Then there is the word "brother"—a word that to the Victorian expressed one of the most disinterested affections of which the human heart is capable. The moderns apparently are changing all that. So I judge, at least, after reading an impassioned statement of a Communist on the present European situation:

> Meanwhile in the East the people are marching to victory. First the Poles, then the Finns, have taken the hand of their Soviet brothers and are smashing their oppressors.

I could not help wondering as I read this whether the writer had just begun to study the Bible and, not having got beyond the first few chapters, had it fixed in his head that the normal type of brother was Cain. Even so, he must have misunderstood the author of *Genesis*, for there is no authority for assuming that at the critical moment of their undeclared war Abel grasped Cain's "friendly hand."

In search of light on the use of the word "brother," I dipped into a Dictionary of Quotations, and I must admit that I found that Cain was not the only brother in the modern meaning of the word. A verse from a poem of Campbell's runs, for example:

> Another's sword has laid him low,
> Another's and another's;
> And every hand that dealt the blow—
> Ah me! it was a brother's.

Not great poetry, but proof, at best, that in the interval between Cain's time and our own there have been brothers and brothers. Then a quotation from *Hamlet* reminded me of another brother who smashed his way to victory in what the nineteenth century would have looked on as an unbrotherly fashion. Again, however, we have good reason for believing that the poisoned King failed at the crisis to grasp his brother's friendly hand. This may have been because he was asleep. On the other hand, there seems to have been a general inclination among the old writers to disapprove of fratricide. We have a quotation from Seneca: "Regard it as impiety to hurt even a bad brother." Another quotation runs: "Wrath of brothers is fierce and devilish." Brotherliness had not yet taken on its twentieth-century meaning.

Presumably, if the brother who kills his brother is henceforth to be held up as the ideal type, we are now entering into a new phase of morality. We often hear the break-up of the family spoken of as though it were a good thing, and modern brothers seem to be doing all in their power to hasten the good work. The psycho-analysts are here standing in the way of progress. Taking the Biblical view of family relationships they treat people who even in childhood wished to kill their fathers or mothers as persons not to be encouraged but to be amended. It may be, however, that there is already a neo-psycho-analyst in existence proclaiming that Oedipus, not Aeneas, is the model for wise sons to follow. Synge, in *The Playboy of the Western World*, invented a situation in which a man is made a local hero because it is believed that he has killed his father with a spade. A most unfilial act, many people thought at the time the play was produced; but Synge may have been a true prophet of the future of civilisation. "Filial," like "brother," may easily change its meaning in a changing world.

There are precedents for such turnabouts. An eminent personage, quoted by Milton, said: "Evil, be thou my good," showing that words can be made to mean anything you wish them to mean. I have no doubt that by the time he tempted Eve, Satan had convinced himself that this was a good thing. If we are going to call good evil, and evil good, however, we shall have to rewrite our literature—especially the old-fashioned literature on which we have brought up children. All those stories about knights rescuing ladies from giants must be radically altered. Each of them must henceforth end with a pact between the knight and the giant to become the lady's joint-gaolers. The wolf that had designs on the life of Little Red Riding Hood will be elevated into a hero, and children will be taught to say: "It served Red Riding Hood right." As for the conflict of interests between the spider and the fly, all good children will be on the spider's side. "Yes, do walk into his parlour," they will urge the fly excitedly. "He's such a nice spider." The wolf will also be applauded in his dealings with the lamb. He told such clever lies, and, besides, a wolf must live.

The truth is, if you change the meanings of words sufficiently, you can excuse almost anything. We are largely the voluntary slaves of words, and under their domination we

cease to distinguish between right and wrong. Call a people fighting for its life White Guards, and you will find yourself justifying every kind of blackguardliness in those who attack them. Just as in the past men doped themselves with words like "Papist" and "heretic," so to-day men dope themselves with words like "capitalist," "imperialist," and "Bolshevist." It is sometimes said that we could not think without the gift of language, but it looks as though we could not think with it. Even brains do not enable a man to think when once he has made up his mind that "good" means evil and "evil" good.

Consider, for example, the extraordinary arguments used by those who apologise for the Russian attack on Finland. To any old-fashioned politician who understood the word "Imperialism" in its old sense this is as flagrant an example of Imperialism as the world has yet seen. I do not say that it is the worst case of Imperialism in history, but it is as bad as the worst. Yet there are people who, by twisting words out of their right meanings, make out that it is the Finns who are the Imperialists or, at least, the tools of Imperialists. Bombs are dropped by brotherly airmen on the children of the Finnish proletariat, and this, we are told, is good anti-Imperialist and anti-capitalist work. Yet man is supposed to be an animal endowed with reason.

Then it is argued that Russia is acting in self-defence. "Self-defence" is another word that has changed its meaning. It used to mean defending yourself against someone who was attacking you. Now it means conjuring up pictures of an imaginary attack which no one in his senses believes possible and seizing or attempting to seize the territories of your imaginary attacker. "Oh, but," they say, "look how near Leningrad is to the Finnish border. Russia can never feel safe till she has made it impossible to attack her through Finland." If that argument holds good in morality, however, the Finns have obviously as much right to occupy Leningrad as the Russians have to occupy any part of Finland. After all, it is as important to the Finns as to the Russians to feel safe. Hath not a Finn eyes? If you prick him, will he not bleed? Or is it only the strong nations that have the right to feel safe at the expense of their neighbours? If this view is accepted, then all the pillagings and plunderings of the old Imperialisms are justified. For there has always been danger over the border.

Think, for example, of the unsafe position of England. There is a possibility, we are told, of an attack being launched on her through Holland and Belgium. Would the preachers of the new morality, then, consider it right to bomb the civilians of Holland and Belgium in order to persuade them to hand over parts of their national territory? It is not long since the subjection of Ireland was defended on the ground that it was essential to England's safety. This argument could be equally applied to the conquest of France, but apparently it is only the weak who merit punishment for being dangerous. That, perhaps, is why Russia did not attack Germany, which is obviously a thousand times more dangerous to her than Finland. The new morality disapproves of attacks on the strong. They are not brotherly.

Still, if "Safety First" becomes the rule in international affairs, I am afraid that every country must begin to get ready to attack not only its weaker but its stronger neighbours. I doubt whether any country can be considered absolutely safe so long as any other country is allowed to remain free. Perhaps this is why big brotherly nations aim at world domination. They feel that, if they can achieve this, they will be safe from everybody even if everybody is not safe from them. A world bombed into brotherhood—it may be what we are coming to. Perhaps we misunderstood the nature of the brotherhood of man in the old days. We were too sentimental. Now that the Russians have shown us the way we may learn to say it with bombs. Bombs without aggression—bombs all labelled with the word "Fraternity"—that may yet be the means of blowing open the door into the new world. But I doubt it.

Y. Y.

Miscellany

COUNTRY NOTES

Farming in Wartime

It will be instructive to see what permanent effect, if any, the necessities of war produce on that most conservative of mortals, the English farmer. He was not too enthusiastic last summer, when the Ministry of Agriculture wisely attempted to bribe him with the promise of £2 an acre subsidy into ploughing some of his poorer grassland; and now that the conversion of a proportion of grass into arable has become compulsory he is still inclined to be obstructive rather than helpful. Oddly enough, the small yeoman, the 50- to 100-acre man, proves himself more willing than his neighbour with the larger holding. For some reason, the bigger farmer, who ought to give the example, puts every difficulty in the way: he ploughs because he must, but, having ploughed, sits back complacently with a certain *Schadenfreude*, saying that his new furrows are there obediently waiting, but that he can't obtain the necessary seed and when is the Government going to send it along? The obvious retort is, if the willing man can obtain it, why can't the others? To this retort there seems to be no answer, except that they won't; don't want to; resent being dictated to; resent their routine arrangements being altered; and take up a general attitude on the lines that if the Government (that vague, innimical, tiresome, ignorant body comfortably settled in offices somewhere in Whitehall) insists on compelling a man to plough pasture he has never ploughed before, it is up to Government to supply the seed they want sown. If not, let Government look out for itself. If they won't give us the seed, so much the worse for them. It is a childish attitude to adopt, an equivalent of the schoolboy's jeer, "Sucks!"; a desire to score off authority, a total lack of understanding that helpfulness and co-operation must be pooled to the common good.

Yet there are many experiments full of interest which can and must be made. There is, for example, the question of substitute foodstuffs for animals at a time when expense and actual shortage must both be taken into consideration. Those happy days are numbered when all we had to do was to order the required amounts from the corn-merchant and in due course pay the bill. Schemes for a scientific balancing of an alternative diet have been drawn up, and encouragement given for a more extensive production of such things as beans, peas, and potatoes, but the farmer who all his life has regarded cake and dairy-meal as the orthodox nourishment for his cattle resents the innovation and snorts contemptuously at the new-fangled mention of calories and vitamins. True, there are some who will claim proudly that by the end of the year they hope to be self-supporting, but they are the honourable exceptions to the rule.

One unforeseen effect of these extended sowings should prettily influence our landscape next summer. Flax must be grown for the supply of linseed, and if our farmers will only cultivate it on any large scale we may look down on sky-blue lakes spreading amongst the fields of corn. It will be an unfamiliar sight, for although flax is grown in the north of Ireland for the worth of its fibre, England has foolishly neglected this most valuable and beautiful crop, relying chiefly on imports from India, Russia, the United States (where it goes by the odd name of Duluth), and above all from Argentina. There is no reason why it should not be successfully cultivated here, with the advantage that the purity of the home-grown crop can be readily controlled. The list of undesirable aliens that can mix themselves with linseed is so long that a special Act of Parliament had to be framed to deal with it. Rape, wild mustard, and Gold-of-Pleasure are only three out of the number which Nature adds; but dishonest man also took a hand in the process of adulteration, with the addition of shudes and buffum.

V. SACKVILLE-WEST

THE LEICESTER GALLERIES

MESSRS. Ernest Brown and Phillips have provided an exhibition to which one would be glad to take a French visitor. Here are three English artists, unequal in talent, but all with something of their own to express. It is, moreover, a considerable pleasure to be given one-man shows instead of the variegated assemblies of which we lately have had too many. Henry Moore is an artist whom it is particularly difficult to criticise. So, at least, I find; for in front of his works I vary between enthusiasm, dislike and mere bewilderment. His temperament or character as an artist baffles me. He is an eclectic, who has taken hints from a variety of sources, from Picasso conspicuously, from the Surrealists, from the Constructivists, from the art of savage peoples and from the Renaissance. But my trouble—and it may be my fault—is that I cannot perceive beneath this eclecticism an integrated personality. Some of his large carvings in the past have seemed to me positively shocking—ferocious objects such as might serve a despot to cow a conquered population, symbols fit for a Hitler or a Stalin. His drawings, on the other hand, often have a romantic beauty that excites my covetousness. These usually are variations on a theme or serial explorations of a shape, and it seems that in the process of finding his way Mr. Moore is often more expressive than in the completed object. The one certain fact is that he is enormously accomplished—indeed I doubt if there is a more brilliant executant to be found in this country.

The large Reclining Figure in his new exhibition reminds one of an *objet trouvé*, one of those dead tree-trunks to which natural forces have given an accidental expressiveness. (Mr. Paul Nash may here have afforded a suggestion.) But, in fact, it is a highly intellectual edifice, an elaborate system of subtle curves that demands long consideration. This is an impressive affair, and not ferocious, though inhuman. Then there are some small reclining figures in which Mr. Moore seems to offer as it were vulture-picked versions of Renaissance figurines. But in most of the lead objects he has departed so far from the original human model that to call one, as he does, "Mother and Child" seems needless and incongruous. They do usually suggest animal rather than mechanical forms, though one looks like the jack of a motor-car. Where most sculptors have been fascinated by muscle, Mr. Moore seems obsessed with bones. Perhaps as a consequence of this, his sculpture lacks the vitality that we enjoy in the highly stylised sculpture of Scythians and Africans; I can obtain from his lead-work, I confess, no emotion—merely the recognition that these are very well-made objects, like unpainted Greek vases. They are hardly intended, I presume, to be much more than exquisite chimney-piece ornaments. The medium is artfully handled but the results are as deadly dry as late Stravinsky. Mr. Moore has used coloured strings or wires, I do not say to enliven but to brighten a number of these objects. What the purchaser does when mice nibble the twine I cannot imagine, unless he can get his sculpture restrung by Messrs. Lillywhite or Slazenger.

The show includes a group of drawings, which I confidently recommend to collectors. They have a pulse that I cannot detect in the sculpture based upon them. They are mysterious and refined—one suggests a princely picture-gallery, another Roman statues, lichenous in a desert or cobweb-draped in an abandoned temple. Looking at them, I wonder again, very impertinently, whether Mr. Moore may not be a painter who has taken the wrong turning. For the merits of these drawings seem to me conspicuously picturesque rather than sculptural. Apart from the *mise en page* and the lovely use of colour, the smudges and squiggles are the handwriting of a natural painter. Perhaps it is his destiny to remarry the two arts with polychrome sculpture, a form of expression that has been neglected or abused for centuries.

In the next room the paintings of Mr. Ivon Hitchens combine to make a most happy impression. He ought to be given some great public room to fresco—a music-room, for choice, because his painting aspires to the condition of music. If Mr. Coldstream is the Calvin among our painters, Mr. Hitchens is the Casanova. I mean not that his pictures are pornographic—he rarely deals with the human figure—but that he abandons himself utterly to the sensuous delights of colour and form. Each picture springs from something seen, a path between waters, a mill-pool, a blackbird and a garden, but the subject often becomes almost completely lost like the flowers and canals and animals in the more stylised Persian carpets. Mr. Hitchens seems to me most successful when he does not run out of sight of the starting-point. At least, I think that it is easier for the spectator to take in the formal harmonies if there is a recognisable subject to satisfy a part of his mind which otherwise might be distracting his attention. I wish psychologists would look into this, for while the subject of a picture is often unimportant, the existence of a subject does in practice facilitate enjoyment. I suspect that it also facilitates expression for the painter rather as the demands of regular metre are more of a help than a hindrance to the poet. It is notable that far the best abstract pictures yet produced are the creation of a painter profoundly concerned with human emotions. Lacking Picasso's hard-headedness, an artist who indulges in abstract painting or sculpture is in danger of drifting into self-hypnosis, finding significance in forms that have little meaning for other people. From this temptation neither Mr. Moore nor Mr. Hitchens, I think, is exempt. Consequently I specially welcome Mr. Hitchens's portrait, which is one of his finest works, and which promises a development of discipline. Other particularly happy inventions are Nos. 44, 46 and 53. His pictures sometimes seem too large for their content, that is to say rather empty. He takes pains to seem slapdash, but the longer you look at his works, the more signs of calculation you see in them. He is one of the most delightful painters in this country, and this exhibition increases one's respect for him. I wish, by the way, that he would try his hand at tempera: the quality of his oil-paint is not always very nice, and a clearer medium might sometimes suit him.

The third exhibitor at the Leicester Galleries is Mr. Anthony Gross. He is acutely interested in his subjects, usually suburban streets built in the nineteenth century. Like Mr. Betjeman, he delights in the divagations of Victorian taste, the fine frenzy of speculative builders inspired by a misunderstanding of Ruskin. He contrives to make pleasing and witty water-colours out of his researches.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

MUSIC IN LONDON

LAST week at Sadler's Wells, Mozart's *Don Giovanni* was performed for the first time this season. The cast was familiar with the exception of Don Ottavio who, on this occasion, was Mr. David Lloyd, whose excellent qualities were first revealed to me at Glyndebourne. In most performances of *Don Giovanni* the part of Don Ottavio is one of the least satisfactory features, another being, of course, Donna Elvira. Both parts are extremely exacting and call for superb singing and acting. On this occasion Mr. David Lloyd's Ottavio was one of the best things in the performance. His singing stood out amid a great deal of what can only be described as singing of distinctly indifferent quality; also he managed to infuse vigour and conviction into a part which is generally played in a lifeless and unconvincing style. Miss Joan Cross's merits are well known, but Donna Anna is not one of her best parts, while the most I can find to say about the performance of Miss Molly de Gunst as Donna Elvira is that it improved in the course of the evening from a very unsatisfactory beginning. The extreme difficulty of the task which Mozart's operas impose upon the performers, both as singers and actors, is shown by the fact that even Mr. Arnold Matters has shown to better advantage—as Falstaff, for example—than as Don

Giovanni, although he gave a respectable if not a brilliant performance. One of the least pleasing features of the production is the commonplace and even ugly scenery and the lack of any real distinction of style.

These faults and the general lack of polish and a high technical standard both on the stage and in the orchestra which Mozart's operas make conspicuous, can be ascribed largely to the economic conditions under which Sadler's Wells works. In order to obtain better artists, higher salaries should be paid. As it is, the theatre is being hard pressed to keep open, having no financial reserves to carry it through bad seasons or the common accidents of theatrical enterprise such as the capriciousness of public favour. It is a great pity that at this especially critical period the B.B.C. should have reduced its valuable support by broadcasting performances to something considerably below its pre-war standard. Perhaps this is only temporary. Meanwhile, the management of Sadler's Wells must do their best to carry out the old policy which all experienced impresarios have found to be the most profitable, i.e. the less money you have the more you ought to spend. It is also necessary to relax no effort to obtain new and young talent. Meanwhile opera-lovers will always find an excellent programme of opera at Sadler's Wells, including, throughout the month of February, among others: *Faust*, *Figaro*, *Il Trovatore*, *Die Fledermaus*, *Rigoletto* and *La Bohème*. To maintain a repertory like this in wartime is indeed something.

An announcement made at the concert of the Royal Philharmonic Society last Thursday by Mr. Theodore Holland, revealed the encouraging fact that the attendance was much better than had been expected. The programme was not of the kind to be described as popular with music lovers. Sir Henry Wood conducted and the first part of the programme consisted of Granville Bantock's very competent and agreeable overture "The Pierrot of the Minute," Bax's "Tintagel" and Vaughan-Williams's fairly recent "Serenade to Music," a setting for 16 voices and orchestra of words taken from Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*.

It is legitimate and desirable that musicians should be inspired by poets and vice versa. But why is it that so many excellent musicians show such a strange lack of instinct in this matter? You would never find a good poet taking a Beethoven sonata or a Bach prelude and setting words to it! Why is it, then, that such an able composer as the late Gustav Holst should have wasted so much time and talent in setting for chorus and orchestra Keats's *Ode to the Nightingale*? A work which, rightly, has never been heard of since its first performance.

And now Dr. Vaughan Williams has set to music Shakespeare's incomparable blank verse (not his lyrics, intended as songs for music!) and has chosen such a passage as:

> How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank!
> Here will we sit, and let the sounds of music
> Creep in our ears: soft stillness and the night
> Become the touches of sweet harmony.
> . . . Look how the floor of heaven
> Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold:
> There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st
> But in his motion like an angel sings,
> Still quiring to the young-eyed Cherubins:
> Such harmony is in immortal souls:
> But whilst this muddy vesture of decay
> Doth close us in we cannot hear it
> etc.

Such words are, emphatically, not to be set to music. They might inspire music but it would be music pure, not music misusing the words and obtaining a mixed effect by dubious association. I know that many musicians do not hold this view, but it is my opinion and I believe that it would be the opinion of the majority of poets who understood the art of music.

After the interval a good though not an outstanding performance of Mozart's glorious Concertante Symphony in E flat for violin, viola and orchestra was given by Albert Sammons and Lionel Tertis. The chief defect of this performance was its lack of breadth. The next Philharmonic concert will take place on Thursday, February 22nd, at 2.30 p.m., when Dr. Malcolm Sargent will conduct a concert including Beethoven's C minor Concerto played by Myra Hess, Dvorak's G major symphony and Berlioz's "Beatrice and Benedict" overture. On the following Tuesday (Feb. 27th) at 7 p.m. Dr. Felix Weingartner will be the conductor.

It is to be hoped that the wartime innovation of starting concerts at 7 p.m., instead of at 8 or 8.30, will become permanent. On the Continent concerts and theatres have always begun an hour or more before the usual London times. This is preferable for many reasons, but chiefly because it does not waste so much time for people who are working until 6 o'clock or later in town and have to snatch a hasty meal and also find they are very late home. When concerts and theatres begin at 7 o'clock it is possible either to have a sandwich and a drink beforehand or to have supper in peace afterwards. It is much pleasanter to be able to discuss what one has heard with friends after a concert than to have to rush home. Also, music should be listened to before eating and drinking, not afterwards. A plebiscite taken earlier in the season showed a definite majority for the hour of 7 o'clock and I much hope this hour will become the usual one for all evening entertainments of a serious nature demanding the full exercise of one's intellectual faculties. Other kinds of entertainment are, of course, all the better for being heard after a very good dinner. W. J. TURNER

LOST LEADERS OR STRAYED REVELLERS?

A LITERARY (or left-wing) erstwhile well-wisher would
Seek vainly now for Auden or for Isherwood;
The Dog-beneath-the-skin has had the brains
To save it, Norris-like, by changing trains.

ANTHONY POWELL

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"Lights Up," at the Savoy

Mr. Cochran's new Revue is very like his old ones, quick, slick, well-groomed and more spectacular than witty. Prevented from combing the Continent for dancers and jugglers, he has provided some caustic scenes of provincial and suburban life, excellently played by Mr. Clifford Mollison, Miss Doris Hare, Mr. James Hayter and Miss Betty Shale. The star is Miss Evelyn Laye: hitherto we have admired her, like Lady Hamilton, principally for her prettiness and her Attitudes. But now with great enterprise she has become a comedienne, and shows a very subtle humour. As a conjuror's assistant and as Cora Pearl singing "Only a Glass of Champagne," she excels. The show has one song, "C'est la Guerre," so much livelier than any of the others that one wonders how the authors achieved it. Miss Phyllis Stanley is a stunning beauty, and almost reconciled us to a scena called "A Fragonard Picture," which would be better described as "Strip-Tease *à la* Marcus Stone." The decor by Miss Doris Zinkeisen may seem a little *vieux jeu* to the sophisticated, but the colours are very bright, and some of the Edwardian costumes very funny. At one moment the Young Ladies appear in long black gloves, short white shorts and red-heeled black boots coming above the knee, a costume exquisitely adapted to appeal to a particular taste, but it is not Miss Zinkeisen one gathers, who is responsible. An advertisement in the programme quotes Miss Evelyn Laye's epigram—"A nightly eye mask is just the thing for these trying times." The same might be said about *Lights Up!*

The Ballet Rambert at the Arts Theatre

The advent of the Ballet Rambert at the Arts Theatre Club brought a standard of dancing which has hitherto been lacking there, and Mr. Rubin is to be congratulated in having secured Mme. Rambert's co-operation. Nevertheless, though our comments on the re-appearance of the Ballet Rambert must begin with a renewed appreciation of the genius of Sally Gilmour in *Lady into Fox*, and of the delightful quality of all the company in *Czernyana*, which is now so excellently performed that its

intelligence, humour and spatial design acquire their full value, they must end with a complaint that Walter Gore's new ballet, *Cap over Mill*, should have been hurried on to the stage several weeks before it was ready for performance. The Ballet Rambert has a sufficiently large and amusing repertory to have afforded to wait a few weeks till this charming ballet had been rehearsed to perfection, when it would certainly have received from the beginning the warm reception which must some time await it. It is at present too long for its choreographic content, which in spite of its two scenes is extremely slight. The first scene is of French camp life, during the ebullient humours of which an exceedingly pretty vivandière, Lisa Serova, is won by the Army Surgeon, Walter Gore. The second is the celebration of their silver wedding amid the domesticity of a country cottage. Sally Gilmour, as the grandchild, dances a pert and amusing solo, on the lines of the now classic ballet child in *Jeux d'Enfants*, and Lisa Serova has a long duet with the wedding-cake which not all her charm and skill can prevent from being slightly tedious. Allured by a fresh call to arms, off flies the matron's cap, and away dances the whole company back to the wars. The music, by Stanley Bate, is extremely well done and, after a week's performance, very well played. Fugal in texture, its rhythms sparkle with life, and there is a perfect co-ordination of mood between the choreography and the music. Yet one has the feeling that the interchange between the choreographer and the composer was not nearly close enough during the actual composition of the ballet. That the music should be the right length is an elementary necessity. That music and dance rhythms should be inseparably interwoven is one which is not sufficiently recognised. A longer period of common rehearsal would have done wonders, and it should be one of the aims of the Arts Theatre Club to procure this for the composers. The unity of mood between dance and music was absent in the decor, which clashed with both. Nadia Benois's musical comedy romantic bower provides a top-heavy commentary on the second scene, which seems to call for a Douanier Rousseau-esque treatment. Here again one feels a lack of co-ordination, where a little more time would have worked wonders. The costumes were charming, and would have been much more effective if they could have disported themselves on a restless background.

"On Your Toes," at the Warner Theatre
"The Great Victor Herbert," at the Plaza
"Mamele," at the Academy

On Your Toes, as a musical comedy, was a little too sophisticated for London audiences, or perhaps a little too insolently iconoclast; in 1937 it was undoubtedly bad form to satirise the ballet. In fact so unthinkable was it that audiences refused to recognise the parodies provided in *On Your Toes* and sat in hushed silence through a very funny burlesque ballet. The film, catering for a wider public, is naturally less subtle than the play in its attack, but even so, it is not until the "Princess Zenobia" ballet sequence (a parody on *Schéhérezade*) descends to actual farce that the audience sees the joke. The story is a skit at the expense of classical ballet, ballet dancers, and ballet masters, and culminates in the production of a "jazz ballet" to the very effective Hart and Rodgers rhapsody, "Slaughter on Tenth Avenue." This ballet, with choreography by Balanchine, is exquisitely danced by Zorina, and, though a little showy and pretentious, it provides excellent material for the camera. Zorina and Eddie Albert act charmingly, the dialogue is amusing of its type, and, above all—nobody sings.

As a contrast, in *The Great Victor Herbert* everybody sings all the time; in fact, there is little else to do. Apparently Victor Herbert (perhaps one should mention, despite the self-assurance of the title, that he was an American composer of operetta popular at the beginning of the century) led a rather uneventful life, judged by film standards, and so in order to introduce thirty-five of his most popular compositions a story about two singers who behave in the most inconsequential and self-destructive manner has been employed. Walter Connolly as Victor Herbert makes fleeting and benign appearances only long enough to provide breathing space between duets. Allan Jones and Mary Martin do most of the singing very nicely, and Susanna Foster, aged about fourteen, helps them out in a piercing soprano; Lee Bowman as Dr. Moore suddenly invents a serum for pneumonia: he must have wandered in from another set. Recommended only for those with nostalgic memories for Victor Herbert's music, of whom there are probably considerably more in Seattle than in Seven Dials.

Mamele, a Yiddish film, is a domestic comedy on the Cinderella theme, introducing a little music and one or two songs for the benefit of the star, Molly Picon. Mamele is the Yiddish for little mother: Molly Picon, an actress with a personality of blasting strength, plays Havche, a young girl left in charge of her entire family, father, brothers and sisters, who gets no thanks for it except occasionally being referred to as Mamele. Finally, Havche lands the best match in the district, but as this Yiddish Prince Charming is of a type not usually recognised as attractive, it is impossible to rejoice in her good fortune. Miss Picon sings, dances and bears the brunt of the film with fortitude and ability. The acting and the photography are natural to a degree; the dialogue may possibly be scintillating and witty—the English sub-titles would not lead one to believe so.

"The Merchant of Venice," at the Kingsway

No performance of *The Merchant of Venice*, perhaps, can quite overcome the tedium of certain passages: the casket scenes, the capers of the two Gobbos. We know, before the suitors begin, how each will choose, and it is impossible for us to feel the least trepidation. Nerissa, at the Kingsway Theatre, gave a little gasp of relief when the Prince of Arragon moved on, but the effect was artificial, and artificial in a way in which the trial scene, for all its palpable disguises, is not. More convincing was the hint—no more than a hint—of Portia's amused exasperation with the whole affair. Miss Rosalinde Fuller, who spoke and acted with great energy, gave us a Portia both dominating and attractive, and it was largely due to her that these scenes went more briskly than usual. Later on, she made a thrilling figure in the court of justice. But the evening depends, of course, on Shylock. Mr. Donald Wolfit's Shylock was admirable in every way. His methods are not spectacular; if anything (we are used to fireworks here) he understated the part. Yet he managed to deliver the well-known speeches with fresh emphasis; the dignity of his early appearances shaded into a terrifying obstinacy and dilapidation; we were made neither to recoil nor to sympathise too much. The rest of the cast—especially Miss Rosalind Iden as Nerissa, Miss Sara Westerman as Jessica, and Mr. Michael Ashwin as Bassanio—gave him good support, and the dresses looked well against a rather neutral background of arches and curtains. One minor blemish: "Tell me where is fancy bred?" sung flat off-stage. We can safely recommend anyone who wants to make a dent in the black-out to try spending an evening at the Kingsway. The other plays to be given by this company in their first fortnight are *Othello*, *Twelfth Night*, *Hamlet* and *Much Ado About Nothing*. A further programme will be announced later.

Water Colours and Pencil Drawings at Agnew's

The annual exhibition at Messrs. Agnew's is full of interesting and charming objects. This year there are no Cotmans or Constables, but there is a very fine Gainsborough, *Langdale Pikes*, good examples of de Wint, Cozens and Turner. A very curious effect is seen in *Fishing Boats in a Calm* by S. Atkins. There are twelve Sickerts, six Johns and six Wilson Steers. A Nude (169) by Geoffrey Tibble revives one's interest in this painter who so often disappoints. Other water-colours that hold the eye are: *A Stream in Sunlight* by P. H. Jowett, *A Study in Yellow, White, and Blue* by Paul Nash, the pale blue *Performing Horses* by Keith Baynes, and Miss Bellingham-Smith's elegant Impressionist pastiche *On the River*. Altogether a pleasant show that calls for enjoyment rather than for criticism.

THE COMING WEEK

SATURDAY, February 17th—
- Howard Fox: "Federal Union and Group Psychology," 26 Grosvenor Place, 2.30.
- Chamber Music Concert, Morley College, 3.
- N. Rothman: "A Lawyer Visits the U.S.S.R.," 98 Gower Street, 3.

SUNDAY, February 18th—
- John Katz: "Nihilism To-day," Conway Hall, 11. Concert, 3.
- Entertainment for Free German League of Culture, in which Dame Sybil Thorndike, Beatrix Lehmann, Gwen Ffrangcon-Davies, Leslie French and others will take part. Embassy Theatre, 8.

MONDAY, February 19th—
- Kingsley Martin: "The Technique of Propaganda," Birkbeck College, 1.15.
- Poetry Recital by Lorna Davis, Central Hall, 1.15.
- R. R. Kuczynski: "Lebensraum," Canterbury Hall, Cartwright Gardens, W.C.1. 5.
- Hon. Harold Nicolson: "A New World Order," Morley College, 6.30. Admission 1s.
- International Concert by Refugee Youth Players, with Dame Sybil Thorndike, Sadler's Wells, 7.30.
- M. Génissieux: "France and the War," Trade Union Club, 7.45

TUESDAY, February 20th—
G. Soloveytchik: "The Economic and Social Conditions of the Northern Countries," Canterbury Hall, 5.
WEDNESDAY, February 21st—
Fabian Lunch, Speaker: J. M. Keynes, who will explain his revised proposals. Royal Hotel, Woburn Place, 1. Tickets 2s. 6d. from the Fabian Society.
Prof. G. F. Webb: "Architecture," Birkbeck College, 1.15.
C. Dutt: "Intervention and Non-Intervention," 2 Keats G. 7.45.
"The Light of Heart," Apollo.
THURSDAY, February 22nd—
Royal Philharmonic Society Concert, Queen's Hall, 2.30.
Teatime Concert, Queen Mary Hall, 5.15.
Prof. Denis Saurat: "The Ethical Teachings of William Blake," Conway Hall, 8.
FRIDAY, February 23rd—
Lunchtime Concert—Bach programme, Birkbeck College, 1.
Prof. Gilbert Murray: "Approaches to Peace," Canterbury Hall, 5.
Dr. H. Pevsner: "Art and the Italian Renaissance," Birkbeck College, 5.30.
British Federation of Business and Professional Women International Night Celebration, Gatti's Restaurant, 6. Tickets 4s.

Correspondence

CONDITIONS IN FRANCE

SIR,—The letter from "G. L." in your last issue calls attention to something which may be of great importance to all on the Left, if this war is actually to be waged for "democracy" and especially for what Mr. Chamberlain recently called "Christian practice."

Horror and disgust at the Russian Government's action in Finland—many people feel about this as Olive Schreiner said she felt about the English Government's action against the Boer Republics, as if she had seen her mother lying drunk in the gutter—should not so blind us that we stand aside and complacently allow any group, Communist (or even I.R.A.) to be hunted down, persecuted or denied any just right. It is so easy for a word like Communist to be made into a branding-iron to be applied to anything marked out for slaughter.

In this respect, although to a Die-Hard Communist-Party member, Miss Odette Keun and I are just a couple of harmless, squealing Liberals, to the Die-Hard Reactionary with the handy branding-iron the Liberal goats and the Communist sheep are so many cattle to be duly stamped and swept into the abattoir together.

Russia's action—completely inexplicable to the common man—makes it all the more necessary for Socialists to strive for justice and liberty for the individual, or the minority group. Make no mistake, the Communists will be regarded as fair game for a long time, and the hunting instincts of the English are not noticeably diminished in wartime. WINIFRED HORRABIN

ELECTORAL TRUCE

SIR,—According to the official statements of the Labour Party Executive and the party leaders, the National Government is inefficient and cannot be trusted to prosecute the war competently or to create a satisfactory world after the peace.

Yet Mr. Thurtle, who presumably subscribes to these views, considers that to draw attention to them at by-elections would indicate that the Labour Party is ready to join in "some Government." Why? Surely the more logical and obvious implication of an attack on the Government's muddle would be that we are willing and ready to form a Labour Government which would do better.

I have at times heard Mr. Thurtle indulging in criticism of this Government, but before reading his letter it had not occurred to me that the logic of his attitude implied his readiness to join it.

79 New North Road, GEORGE JEGER
Shoreditch, N.1.

THE U.L.F.

SIR,—I think that one point in last week's London Diary should be clarified, as otherwise there is danger of misunderstandings.

In reference to the University Labour Federation's annual conference, Polycritic writes that "By overwhelming majorities the Socialist movements in all the Universities have accepted the Communist attitude to the war."

As you are no doubt yourself aware, the University Labour Federation is a purely *undergraduate* body and is quite distinct from the graduate Labour Parties in the Universities. The U.L.F. cannot, therefore, speak for the Socialist movements in all the Universities. PATRICK GORDON WALKER
Christ Church, Oxford.

SCIENCE AND THE U.S.S.R.

SIR,—The following resolutions, among others, are stated by "Science" to have been adopted by the section of Astronomy of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R. in December, 1938, and printed in Vol. 16, No. 2, of the *Astronomical Journal of the Soviet Union*:

1. Modern bourgeois cosmogony is in a state of deep ideological confusion resulting from its refusal to accept the only true dialectic-materialistic concept, namely, the infinity of the universe with respect to space as well as time.
2. The hostile work of the agents of Fascism, who at one time managed to penetrate to leading positions in certain astronomical and other institutions as well as in the press, has led to revolting propaganda of counter-revolutionary bourgeois ideology in the literature.
3. The few existing Soviet materialistic works on problems of cosmology have remained in isolation and have been suppressed by the enemies of the people, until recently.
4. Wide circles interested in science have been taught, at best, only in the spirit of indifference toward the ideological aspect of the current bourgeois cosmologic theories. . . .
5. The exposé of the enemies of the Soviet people makes necessary the development of a new Soviet materialistic cosmology. . . .
6. It is deemed necessary that Soviet science should enter the international scientific arena carrying concrete achievements in cosmologic theories on the basis of our philosophic methodology.

The antithesis in Russia between proletarian and bourgeois cosmology reminds one of the distinction between Aryan and non-Aryan physics in Germany. A. V. HILL

SIR,—I am not competent to refute Professor A. V. Hill's allegation that "in many fields the claims for Russian science are fraudulent," although I think many of your readers, who are qualified to do so, will dispute his contention. But I am in a position to deny the conclusion reached by Professor Hill later in his letter: that the generous hospitality shown by the U.S.S.R. when she was the host of the 15th International Congress of Physiology, held in Leningrad and Moscow in 1935, is shown to have been "political propaganda" by the fact of the abstention of the U.S.S.R. from participation in the 16th Congress held at Zurich in 1938.

I believe this abstention was due to nothing more sinister than the fact that there are no diplomatic relations between Switzerland and the U.S.S.R. This has made it difficult, if not impossible, for Russians to enter Switzerland except to attend meetings of the League of Nations or International Conferences convened by Governments.

Up to a few weeks ago, I was the Secretary of the International Executive Council of the World Power Conference, an unofficial body which organises scientific congresses on problems concerning power and fuel. The subject-matter of our meetings has seldom lent itself to "political propaganda." Nevertheless, I can testify that we always received the fullest co-operation from our permanent National Committee in the U.S.S.R. Numerous papers have been submitted, and large delegations have attended our meetings in many different countries, and have participated in the discussion.

1, Plowden Buildings, CHARLES H. GRAY
Temple, E.C.4.

RUMANIA

SIR,—As a Rumanian, allow me to lodge a protest against the deprecatory remarks on Rumania's so-called latest policy in connection with the oil problem made in the weekly notes of your issue of February 3rd under the heading "Rumania's New Protector," and the charge laid at her door—that she is responsible for thwarting the expansion of the Balkan Entente—in your editorial, "Balkan Problems," in your issue of February 10th. I believe one should be wary of making an accusation suggesting a change in Rumania's foreign policy, when supported mainly by such information as the growing of soya beans in Bessarabia.

You have conducted a campaign against the concessions Czechoslovakia was forced, under pressure, to make to Germany,

culminating in the Munich Pact. Yet you speak about "the curious obstinacy of Rumania," who although "threatened by all her neighbours, including Russia, none the less refuses to make any adequate concessions to Hungarian and Bulgarian claims."

According to your own post-Munich conclusions, the Czechoslovakian lesson is written plain—every concession is taken as a sign of weakness and further stimulates a devouring appetite. The Rumanian nation is vitally concerned in Hungarian ambitions to create a Hungary of the medieval St. Stephen's Crown. We feel that it is of as great importance to make no concession in regard to such an insensate idea in the Danubian Basin, as it is important for Great Britain not to allow the creation of a National Socialist Holy Roman Empire in Europe.

I do not know from what sources you quote the percentage of the Rumanian population to the Hungarian and Saxon minority in Transylvania, namely 43 Rumanians, 35 Hungarians and 11 Saxons in every hundred. According to the census of 1930, the proportion is as follows: Rumanian, 54.8 per cent.; Hungarian, 20.8 per cent.; Saxon, 12.2 per cent. There is no geographical contiguity between the Hungarian minority and Hungary proper, as was the case between the Sudeten Germans and the Reich.

You admit that autonomy for Transylvania is not a solution, but that instead the granting of cultural autonomy might be the satisfactory settlement. The Hungarian minority in Transylvania has always enjoyed a cultural autonomy to which a bigger scope is given by progressive adjustments. For lack of space, I quote only one instance: in 1918 the Hungarians published 37 periodicals and 17 dailies; in 1935 they had 396 publications, including 45 dailies, apart from the publications to which they have access from Hungary. If you read Lord Rothermere's book, *My Campaign for Hungary*, you will find what the real aims of the Hungarian policy are. Nothing will satisfy Hungary but the reconquest of medieval Hungary's dominions.

As regards Bulgaria, and her claims on Southern Dobrudja, I might make the following comparison: Great Britain does not contemplate the cession of Cyprus to Greece, although the population in Cyprus is more than 90 per cent. Greek. British possession of this island safeguards Great Britain's vital interests in the Eastern Mediterranean and protects the route to India. For the same reason, Rumania cannot make territorial concessions in Southern Dobrudja, for this region is of supreme strategic value, protecting as it does the vital road to the sea.

But what is even more diifficult to understand is that you are urging Rumania to accept moral and material defeat by making concessions to ambitious neighbours, and in the same breath you are implicitly urging her to provoke Germany by stopping deliveries of oil under the terms of the commercial treaty negotiated before the British guarantee, and thereby to invite an onslaught on her on the Polish pattern. Is it so difficult to understand that even if Rumania cannot avoid war, she is anxious to gain precious time, by all means compatible with her national interests?

Instead of making rash accusations, would it not be more useful to start a discussion on such subjects as what would be the practical steps which the Allies should take in case Rumania is attacked by Russia or by any other aggressor?

60 Pont Street, S.W.1. ION AGARBICEANU

[Mr. Agarbiceanu must read over again the passages he criticises. We gave no support to Hungarian territorial claims against Rumania, and even questioned the wisdom of conceding Home Rule. What we did suggest was cultural autonomy, in the sense of control by the minorities of their social services. What we had in mind was something resembling the Millet system prevalent in the old Ottoman Empire, under which each nationality managed its own communal affairs. This the Czechs did offer to their German minority, with our warm approval. In that case also we doubted the wisdom of conceding territorial Home Rule. To answer that the minorities in Rumania have newspapers of their own is merely irrelevant. We suggested control by elected bodies of all social services. The figures we gave were not those for Transylvania alone, but, as we clearly stated, for the whole territory ceded by Hungary to Rumania.

The case of the Dobrudja is wholly different. This territory is contiguous to Bulgaria and has an almost solidly Bulgarian population. The comparison with Cyprus does not touch us (though its population is less solidly Greek than our correspondent supposes), for we have steadily advocated its cession to Greece. But Cyprus never belonged to Greece, as the Dobrudja belonged to Bulgaria. Finally, we did not urge Rumania to break her oil contract with Germany; not by a word or a comma did we suggest it. We pointed out that the Germans appear to have improved their position appreciably.—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

THE IRISH EXECUTIONS

SIR,—I was pleased to see your comment on the Irish executions. It was a great blunder and has thrown Irish opinion on the Nazi side when clemency could have secured friendliness for the war period. Never has there been so much solidarity on any issue as on the executions. Among those who pleaded for a reprieve were the Protestant Archbishop of Dublin, the Chief Rabbi and many leading members of the British Legion, while—after the execution—hundreds knelt and prayed outside the G.P.O. in O'Connell Street. This act will embitter Irish-British relations for our generation. F.

Dublin.

SPANISH COPPER

SIR,—Our attention has been drawn to a statement, repeated in "A London Diary" of your current issue, that "The British-owned Rio Tinto Company is still forced by the Franco Government to supply the Nazis with 35,000 tons of copper ore per month—a fact which, of course, has been omitted from the English press."

There has been no omission as the statement is entirely devoid of fact. The Rio Tinto Company stopped shipping ore to Germany at the beginning of May, 1939, and since that date no Rio Tinto ore or copper has gone to Germany.

Rio Tinto Company, Limited, 11 Old Jewry, London, E.C.2. J. DAVIDSON, Secretary.

[The statement was not ours, but the *New Republic's*, which did not suggest shipment directly to Germany, but indirectly through Italy.—ED. N.S. & N.]

WINIFRED HOLTBY MEMORIAL

SIR,—Some time ago you published a letter above the signature of Charles Roden Buxton, Lady Rhondda, St. John Irvine, G. E. C. Catlin, F. W. Pethick Lawrence, M.P., J. F. Horrabin and myself, suggesting a Fund to establish a permanent memorial to the late Winifred Holtby. Nearly £200 was subscribed, and it was felt that because of Winifred Holtby's work for the black people of Southern Africa, efforts should be made to establish in one of the populous native areas a library available for black men and women. The Johannesburg City Council, as a result of

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our representations, have now decided (and already have put their plans in hand) to erect a Winifred Holtby Memorial Library in one of the native locations in that city. The City will undertake its maintenance and a section of it will contain the books purchased from the funds raised by the Memorial Committee. The books will be selected by Mrs. M. Ballinger, M.P., William Ballinger, Julius Lewin, and Mr. Kennedy, the Johannesburg City Librarian. To these books will be added Winifred Holtby's own books on Africa and other books subscribed by Vera Brittain and friends. A suitable inscription and portrait will appear in the Library.

A. CREECH JONES,
Chairman, Friends of Africa

House of Commons.

THE CZECHOSLOVAK ARMY

SIR,—As one of the leading officials of the Czechoslovak trade union movement I consider it my duty to draw your attention in the name of the Czechoslovak Social Democrats in Great Britain to certain inaccuracies in your note on the Czechoslovak army on January 27th. I shall not concern myself with the question of Czechs and Slovaks nor with the question of the compulsory military service for the citizens of pre-Munich Czechoslovakia. For honest Czechoslovaks and Europeans the question is completely clear. The fight against Nazism is not a question of frontiers but of the conscience of every honest man. Your remark about the attitude of the Czechoslovak Socialists to the National Committee I consider inadequate. The Czechoslovak Social Democrats at home and their leaders abroad have made their attitude to the National Committee quite clear. In so far as they have any objections and complaints concerning the composition of that Committee they settle these in direct discussion with the President of the National Committee Dr. Edvard Benes, who enjoys the confidence of all honest Czechoslovaks without regard to their political convictions, and of whom they know that he himself desires to settle at the earliest possible opportunity all the unsolved questions of the Committee, as for example the representations of the working class and of the Germans. The creation of the National Committee realised the union of all Czechoslovaks abroad. We therefore consider it our duty to give it our full support. We have come abroad in order to fight against Nazism. It is not a matter of positions or of personalities, but of our cause. And incidentally a large number of our Social Democrat collaborators are active in our liberation campaign in important posts, in France and England and especially in the United States.

In our activity away from our own country we always ask ourselves what our people at home would do if it were in our place. We know well that millions of Czechoslovaks envy our good fortune in being able to fight, weapon in hand, against the Nazi barbarism that is trying to choke the liberties of our people. We do not wish to allow any formal objections against the Committee to influence anyone as to whether he will or will not do his duty in the fight against Nazism.

In the present struggle for a free Europe the Czechoslovak Socialists know that their place is at the side of their British and French comrades.

BELIMA JOSEF

13 Fernside Avenue, N.W.7.

[We are glad to publish this letter from one of the most vigorous of the younger generation of Czech Trade Unionists. If we criticise the composition of the National Committee, it is not through any lack of sympathy with the cause of Czechoslovakian liberty, but from a certain anxiety lest racial and class divisions should wreck that cause and, incidentally, lead to a repetition of the mistakes of 1918-39.—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

EXTENDING THE DEATH PENALTY

SIR,—The unexpected statement by the Prime Minister that the Government is considering the introduction of fresh legislation to extend the death penalty for the most serious cases of conveying information to the enemy has excited a great deal of puzzled speculation. He reminded the House of the very heavy penalties which can be imposed for such offences under the existing statute law and the Defence Regulations, but gave no clue to the nature of the fresh dangers which have compelled a consideration of heavier penalties. The crime of High Treason is, of course, already punishable by death, under the existing statute law.

It was never suggested during the last war that there was either demand or necessity for such an extension of the use of the death penalty. From what has been made known since the counter-espionage system of the Government was always quite competent to deal with any danger that existed and there is no reason to believe that it is operating less effectively in this war. Experience in countries like France, where the death penalty can be and has been applied for such offences, gives no support to the belief that it is a more effective deterrent to the spy or the traitor than the milder penalties usually employed in this country.

For more than seventy years, the tendency in Britain has been in the direction of restricting the use of this barbaric penalty, a tendency which has had the support of all enlightened public opinion. It would be deplorable if, as one result of a war in which, it is claimed, we are fighting for right and humanity against evil and inhumane powers, we should find ourselves extending the use of one of the enemy's chief instruments of terror—Capital Punishment. It is to be hoped that all who have regard for the humane traditions of this country will actively resist such a reactionary proposal.

JOHN PATON,
Secretary

National Council for the Abolition of the Death Penalty,
Carn Brea, Vicarage Road,
Penn, Wolverhampton.

THE ATLANTIC AIR MAIL

SIR,—*A propos* your references to the transatlantic air mail service the following experience of our own may prove enlightening. On November 21st last a customer in New York cabled for two manuscripts from our catalogue. The cable did not reach us, having been turned back by the censor, presumably on the ground that our cable address was used. As he received no reply to his first cable our customer cabled again on December 16th, using our full postal address. In an endeavour to catch up with the delay we sent the two manuscripts on December 17th by air mail and advised him by cable that we had done so. A cable advice from him from New York, dated February 6th, advises us that the manuscripts reached him on that day—all but two months after despatch. The postal charges for this execrable service were 5*s.* 3*d.* as against sevenpence by ordinary registered post.

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TROLLOPE

A few days ago, with my head full of Trollope, I visited the parish of a hunting parson. The yellow stucco rectory was large, with ivy trained in grizzled patches on the walls, and round the columns of the portico. The ample lawns sloped down to a brook that harboured otters in its remoter courses. There were innumerable potting sheds. Under an open lean-to stood a gig and tub-cart, both in good order, but not so freshly painted as to have been acquired obviously since the war—for the Canon kept a pony as well as his hunters. The gravel sweep led round, past the shrubbery, past the stables, past the front door, past the well-fenced paddock to the road, and opposite rose the beech avenue to the church. What a scene of retired and antiquated comfort! When the Canon first came to that rectory Anthony Trollope had only been dead a few years and were he to visit it to-day he would find little to surprise him. Here the Reverend Henry Clavering might reluctantly forgo his hunting at Bishop Proudie's suggestion. Here the unlucky Dean, "dear, courteous, kind old gentleman," hero of *The Spotted Dog* in *An Editor's Tales* might return to lament the burnt pages of his manuscript. In Trollope's novels the countryside is like that place, green, calm, without exciting physical features; the towns each have "two pumps, three hotels, ten shops, fifteen beerhouses, a beadle, and a market-place," only now the pumps are petrol pumps. It depends for its deeply moving quality on the life that is lived or has been lived in it and on the capacity of those who see or read about it to comprehend that life.

There is scarcely a place in the South and West of England or Wales that was not known to Trollope through his wanderings as a servant of the Post Office: and how often, passing through any of those places, is one not warmed by the memory of one or other of the persons of his novels? I cannot see a small red dissenting chapel without thinking of Mrs. Frank Fenwick, the Vicar's wife in *The Vicar of Bullhampton*. With the honesty of honest moral indignation she walked fifteen minutes out of her way to every church service, so as to avoid the sight of the chapel being put up near the vicarage. I cannot see a Tudor manor house without thinking of Miss Thorne of Ullathorne, and her disastrous attempts to revive the art of tilting at the quintain. She has become part of the countryside. "Who made the world?" asked Kilvert of a child in his father's parish. "Mr. Ashe," (the local squire) said the child. "Who knows everything you do?" a child was asked the other day in a Berkshire village. "Miss Battle" (the local squiress) said the child. The Thornes, the Ashes and the Battles still follow on, in rural continuity; moved to eloquence, if not by the quintain, by hand-weaving or folk cookery or the decline of blood sports or the emptiness of the churches. I cannot pass through that remote and self-sufficient town Carmarthen without thinking of *Cousin Henry* and the utterly boring yet fascinating problem of the rather thin, single-incident novel of that name. (Will he or won't he burn the will? Or will he go dotty thinking about it?)

"The story was thoroughly English," wrote Trollope of *Framley Parsonage*. "There was a little foxhunting and a little tuft-hunting, some Christian virtue and some Christian cant. There was no heroism and no villainy. There was much Church but more lovemaking." It is a perfect description of this book, and of many others. With a little heroism added here and a little villainy there this might be said of all the Barchester novels, whose initial inspiration came, so admirably, from *The Times* correspondence columns in a dull season of the fifties. And those books, with their placid moral expansion; their uneasy, but not devastating, undertone of slight financial stress (think of Bertie Vesey Stanhope) growing occasionally into tragic proportions; their conservatism, conformity and true piety, certainly give Trollope the right to be called a recorder of his age—but he was more than that. "Mind, we were there (in Town) only for ten weeks. Barely time for the girls to get their teeth properly looked at."

Whenever Trollope is mentioned there is sure to be some talk of escapist literature. He has not been written down genius enough for it to be a virtue or a necessity to have read him. He is not obscure enough for it to be a pleasant idiosyncrasy to have discovered him. He is acceptable, readable, and some of his works can be bought in a pocket edition, and so he is good for the long dark evenings. It is easy to become obsessed with his characters but not as one became obsessed with the pantomine fairy as a child and longed to be a fairy and escape into a world of fluffy skirts and perpetual woodland. No one longs to be Julia Brabazon or Mary Lowther or Burgo Fitzgerald or Frank Gresham; their tragedies are not heroic or picturesque enough, their triumphs not glorious enough. But they get into one's imagination, and will not be left alone. There are books of Trollope's that I have been unable to get through, the Irish ones, for instance, but even now my mind is often with those heroes and heroines whose fortunes I had to leave half-way. I feel at once inquisitive and disloyal, as one does about friends with whom intimacy has been allowed to lapse into indifference. Trollope's characters seem to have a capacity for a life other than that between the pages of the books where they belong, a life not entirely lived between quotation marks. The quotation marks only serve to introduce that life and to illustrate it. "I hate patience and I always did," says Harry Clavering to Florence Burton. "Patience is one of the worse vices I know. It's almost as bad as humility. You'll tell me you're 'umble next. And if you'll only add that you're contented, you'll describe yourself as one of the lowest of God's creatures." Such a young man does not cease to exist because the tale of his love and marriage is finished. Or because the age to which he belonged has given way to another. So, too, with Mrs. Proudie, Trollope writes of his sorrow at having killed her, "so thorough was my knowledge of all the little shades of her character . . . I still live much in the company of her ghost." His own obsession with his creations sometimes becomes a bore. Plantagenet Palliser and naughty little Duchess Cora, to both of whom he was so much attached, sometimes get inexpressibly dull. And yet one is content to read through two volumes of *Can You Forgive Her*, two of *The Prime Minister* and two of *The Duke's Children*, with all their dinner parties, tea parties, garden parties and family parties, for the sake of the humanity to be met with there. No wonder he disliked and despised Disraeli's novels, and thought that *Jane Eyre* would be read when *Pickwick* and *Harry Lorrequer* were finished, "because the men and women depicted are human in their aspirations, human in their sympathies and human in their actions."

Those Henrys and Alices, those deans and archdeacons and bishops, those sad attorneys and knowing clerks belong undoubtedly to the mid-Victorian age, but at any moment they can be translated into our own. Their clothes are different, their jobs, perhaps, their manner of wooing—but they still exist and they are still Trollopean figures.

Reading a new Trollope is like discovering that one's little-known neighbour has some obscure, undreamed-of hobby, when one thought that he only went to the office; that he has a collection of bottle-labels of the last three hundred years, or that he indexes the Notes and Queries of no less than fourteen local papers, or that he owns more unfamiliar diaries than any other bibliophile. He may bore you from time to time, but as he lives next door he will become a permanent friend. MYFANWY PIPER

BRIEFED FOR THE KREMLIN

Must the War Spread? By D. N. PRITT. *Penguin Special.* 6*d.*

In many countries the lawyer and the politician are almost indistinguishable types. The man whose craft it is to find the best case in law which he can for his client and, at least in criminal proceedings, to confuse his statement of facts and of precedent with irrelevant appeals to the emotions of a jury, becomes by a natural process the political attorney, pleading the case for a class or for an interest before the jury of Parliament or on the hustings. In this country we have always had a deep suspicion of the political attorney. It is the feeling that Sir John Simon can on one day give an opinion for the Co-ops. and on another day, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, urge rather different conclusions, that accounts for much of the general distrust of Sir John as a statesman. There is no more telling story than that of the Japanese delegate at Geneva who described Sir John Simon as having stated the Japanese case in Manchuria much better than he had himself succeeded in doing; what shocks us here is not merely that Sir John supported Japanese aggression, but that he should have behaved when representing this country as he is expected to do in a court of law. For in politics there is no judge to sum up impartially and so enable the jury to see through the conflicting appeals of the attorneys. And since there is no third party judgment it falls to the democratic statesman, as far as he can, to put both sides of the case to the electorate. Socialists have often shown that certain M.P.s behave as the delegates of special interests. But it is a matter for complaint. We demand that they should be representatives to whom is entrusted res-

ponsible judgment, and we regard it as their duty to explain to the electors the difficult issues on which they must make up their minds.

We fancy that Mr. Pritt would argue that such a standard of behaviour is impossible, and that a conscious participant in the class struggle should realise that it is impossible and should act on behalf of the workers just as he has always accused Sir John Simon of acting on behalf of certain capitalist and class interests. His job is to state the class case in the court of class war, where there is no justice, but power politics, not principles, but only tactics. Since the legal system both at home and abroad is a mere expression of capitalism, legal arguments must be used quite cynically to down the other side; and the emotions of the public, which still believes in decency, must be bamboozled (to use one of his favourite words) in order to achieve victory for the class he represents. He does not seek truth or justice in this conflict with capitalism, because they are unobtainable, but only a tactical advantage over his equally amoral opponents.

In reading *Must the War Spread?* we must remember that this is Mr. Pritt's philosophy. In his first chapter he writes:

> It is thus necessary for the ruling groups . . . to maintain an elaborate machinery for persuading the man-in-the-street that in what they are doing they are in fact both obeying the dictates of good morals and serving the interest of the mass.

And again:

> The methods employed are selected almost exclusively from the standpoint of results; ethics has very little to do with it. The States "fight dirty" if they can best achieve their ends that way . . . . There are real advantages to be gained by fighting ruthlessly and hitting below the belt when there is no superior authority to keep order or restrain murder.

In these passages Mr. Pritt describes the behaviour of capitalist States. His defence of Russia is that she too must conform to this standard to survive; and his defence of his own book would, we presume, run along the same lines.

Once we grasp this philosophy, it becomes waste of time to blame Mr. Pritt for any inconsistencies in his argument. If he were a democrat we might point out that he first declares there can be no morality or justice in the international class war and then appeals to our sense of justice on behalf of Russia; that he first urges the workers of this country to follow their class interests and then upbraids the "upper-class Englishman who is only too often first of all a member of his class . . . and only secondarily an Englishman." But these inconsistences are all part of a consistent plan. In Mr. Pritt's view, the gloves are off and we are fighting with bare fists. Since the other side plays foul, he cannot be expected to feel any qualms about breaking the rules. His job is to throw red dust in the juries' eyes in the hope that that will eject the white dust now being dusted over them. Mr. Pritt is not writing a text-book but pleading a case; and he does it with all the forensic skill which has made his reputation at the Bar, and without any of those limitations which our laws of cross-examination and the watchfulness of our judges impose upon him in the Courts of Justice.

His case may, perhaps, be summarised as follows: (1) The world is divided into a Socialist State and its clients, and a group of hostile capitalist States with their clients. In such a world of warfare, international law is a sham and neutrality impossible. Therefore, the statesman who grabs Finland or any other small country first is right according to his class interests.

This argument takes some remarkable forms. Mr. Pritt's strategic justifications of Russia are precisely those used by Hitler to justify the destruction of Czechoslovakia and denounced by Mr. Pritt at that time as wholly unjustifiable. Czechoslovakia was a fortified bastion of Germany's enemies: therefore the Nazis, from their point of view, were justified in destroying her if she did not agree voluntarily to surrender. Mr. Pritt's diplomatic arguments are not dissimilar from those of Mr. Chamberlain before Munich:

> Great powers cannot avoid a terrible responsibility for leading small States such as Finland to resist in circumstances of this nature, when that is obviously not the most prudent course. It is a serious thing for a great Power to encourage a small one to resist or to involve it in a war even when the great Power is fully willing and fully able to guarantee victory; but to encourage such resistance when it will pretty certainly lead to defeat, producing merely some indirect advantage to the great Power offering encouragement, would be a little shocking even to a student of politics.

How profoundly M. Bonnet would agree! But this does not worry the class warrior, for whom appeasement is anyone's argument in the class struggle.

(2) For those who care about Socialism and democracy Mr. Pritt argues that the U.S.S.R. is Socialist, while Finland is not a democracy but a client of the capitalist Powers. In this section on Finnish history, there is naturally, as far as we can discover, no reference to the Finnish Co-operatives or to the increase of land ownership since 1919; there is a full account of the period of reaction in Finland and only a bare mention of the Left legislation which since 1936 scotched the Fascist movement and put Finland among the democracies with which the U.S.S.R. was ready to co-operate. Mr. Pritt, because it suits his case, describes Mannerheim's distasteful career in full; because it does not suit his case, he omits reference to the part played by M. Tanner in the civil war. He uses the anti-Kainen case to prove that impartial justice does not exist in Finland; he does not mention the Moscow trials in this connection. He quotes a few fragments of Sir Ernest Simon's study of Finland, in order to argue that money wages are low there; he omits Sir Ernest's proof that the cost of living is also low. As for Mr. Hampden Jackson, the best Socialist expert on Finland, we could find hardly any reference to him. Mr. Pritt would argue that it is for the Whites to examine their own witnesses: he is concerned not with the truth but with the case for the Kremlin.

(3) For those who care about legal niceties, Mr. Pritt devotes a chapter to proving that in invading Finland Russia has "adopted the ordinary rules of international law." In this section he quotes as precedents a speech of Canning in 1808 and one by Joseph Chamberlain in defence of British policy in the Boer War. He does not recall that since 1918 international law has been modified by the Covenant of the League, nor does he refer to any of Stalin's, Litvinov's or Molotov's declarations on the subject of aggression in this context. Apparently Joe Chamberlain's arguments suit the Kremlin better than Mr. Molotov's declarations of a few months ago.

There is a great deal of material in *Must the War Spread* which a serious student of the problem would do well to study. Mr. Pritt rightly exposes the bias and evasiveness of the history in the Finnish White Paper, but he spoils this exposure by substituting an equally evasive Red Paper. He very properly shows the dangers inherent in the theory of "spreading the war"—dangers which many besides Communists see—but he spoils his case by sweeping assertions that the whole British ruling class wants to switch the war against Russia; and he burkes the problem altogether whether the interests of the British workers, whose M.P. he is, are identical with those of the Government of the U.S.S.R. His book will rejoice the faithful, bamboozle some of the well-intentioned and dismay those Socialists who are trying to keep intellectual integrity alive in this world of competitive propaganda. The only excuse for it is that the other side has put out propaganda which is equally partisan: and that, in our opinion, is a poor excuse for a prominent member of the Labour Party to-day.

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So Frail a Thing comes very close to being a good book. It starts in 1912 with three whispering little girls in a Kensington house who are just beginning to be aware of their growing bodies. It ends with their rutting period over in the first days of the present war. The intervening years are spent in a life of drift and slop between beddings, a feeble slavery to the glands. Up to a point it is an excellent picture of the human degradation which follows the eclipse of the reason, but, alas, as the net draws in and these gentlefolk are faced with the consequences of amorality, cocaine appears and the whole structure is shattered by murder. Seven persons in each million of our people are likely to be murdered in a year, it is a crime which has a small and uninteresting reference to the life of typical English middle-class people. That so many people find it of absorbing interest is a symptom of the moral degeneracy which this book starts off by satirising, the effect is of the serpent eating itself from the tail. The murder of the woman who is a cocaine addict has a soundly moral intention, the moment of terror when she faces the gun which is going to kill her is a moment of punishment which fills the same role in the story as

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In this unusual—and unusually delightful book, Mr. Anderson recounts his adventures as a surveyor in Nigeria. It will keep on reminding the reader of other books that he has enormously enjoyed, such as *The Irish R.M.*, *Plain Tales from the Hills*, *Travels with a Donkey*, all reborn in an African setting. 10/6

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SELECTED POEMS Stephen Spender

March 22nd

SOME POEMS W. H. Auden
SELECTED POEMS Louis MacNeice

24 Russell Square FABER & FABER London, W.C.1

the appearance of the devil to claim his own in the old style Morality. However as murder has been used to give a spice to light entertainment for half a century it seems unlikely that the means will achieve the end; a reviewer writing elsewhere of Mr. Gerald Bulletts's sensitive and intelligent book *A Man of Forty* gave a beautiful example of this. There is something a little disgusting to me, he wrote, about the idea of middle-aged people having emotions and being deeply moved by them; however, he went on to say, the book ends with a good juicy murder and the last fifty pages are really thrilling. Helen Beauclerk's woman has thought from her belly in the D. H. Lawrence fashion for twenty-five years and her quick, if frightening, death is a release and not a punishment; in life she has only reached her middle years and she has a long time ahead of her to enjoy the mess she has made for herself. It is life that this woman has to fear and it would be necessary to say so if the satiric intention of the book were to be fulfilled. As it is, the cocaine comes up to enable all but a very few people—a band as numerous as murderers and even less interesting—to say, and to say correctly, " this is not our world " and to remain undisturbed. The thriller element has a neutralising effect, it makes the book the literary equivalent of those doctored coffees which have the negative virtue of not keeping you awake. This is a very great pity because the author writes well and combines a feeling for atmosphere and the inside of people's heads with a gift for capturing forms of speech and appearances.

From time to time American literary critics seize on the less intelligent English books which come to their notice and use them as the basis of a good Bunker's Hill article about the fundamental poverty of English writing. It gives one a certain pleasure to encounter such a book as *Portrait of Jennie* which has travelled in the opposite direction. It is accepted as a book in America, and it has received a good deal of favourable notice. Its emptiness is astonishing; it might have appeared in *The Yellow Book* in a lean year but it would have looked thin there even against the poetry. It is our old friend the kink in time served stewed in Lavender Water; such wisdom as this makes the weight:

> The spring comes year after year, she had said and to-morrow is always. When at last there was no to-morrow anymore, I remembered yesterday. Yesterday it was always too.

WAR BEGINS AT HOME

BY MASS-OBSERVATION★

Edited by

Tom Harrisson and Charles Madge

[CHATTO & WINDUS 9/6]

THE book to which the *Manchester Guardian* gave the whole of a first leader, while Sir Richard Acland, M.P., made a speech in the House about "the results of this quite objective, trained and scientific organization."

The book which J. B. Priestley writes "ought to be in the hands of all politicians, writers, schoolmasters and many others."

The book which analyses

YOUR BOREDOM YOUR WORRY and YOUR BEWILDERMENT

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The story is about an artist who meets a little girl in Central Park who isn't a real little girl but is really a grown up girl at finishing school in Paris. She pops in and out of the past to sit for a portrait—she gets a lot older between sittings but it doesn't seem to matter—and of course the portrait makes him a huge success. She vanishes for the winter into the present when the artist has fallen in love with her at about eight years in the past. Finally she crops up again in the hurricane which swept New England the September before last and exchanges a passionate kiss with the artist while she is being drowned a long way out in the Atlantic. Heinemann's have mounted this twaddle very pleasantly and from wrapper to type it is a model of a well-produced novel, a very beautifully presented petition in intellectual bankruptcy. The same house offers another American novel which is longer but as void of content; *Anne Minton's Life* is the write-up of a newspaper story about a wretched creature who climbed out of a window on to a cornice and lacked the courage to jump until a large crowd had watched him for some hours. Depressing as a newspaper story, it is still more fatuous as the basis of a novel. Mr. Brinig makes his suicide a lunatic, thus depriving the situation of any possible interest from the personal point of view and making nonsense of all the solemn brouhaha about the fight between the forces of life and death in which the text abounds. The shallowest and least worthy of English novels to be published in America during the last decade cannot have been worse than these books which surely came to these shores in the Ministry's Ship Number 3.

The styles of Miss Ethel Mannin, Susan Ertz and George Woden make one think of Russian strategy in Finland, the large disorderly masses come on endlessly and ultimately achieve a sort of success by sheer weight. Miss Mannin's *Julie* rolls on without a well-written sentence and without a spark of wit, but in the end tells a readable magaziny story about the love life of a dance hostess and builds up the seedy atmosphere of provincial night-life. *One Fight More* dawdles about with a story of Franco-American and Anglo-American marital fussings and the marriage back to America of the daughter of the Anglo-American marriage, another readable magazine story untroubled by ideas, a smooth picture of the brainless amorist world satirised in *So Frail a Thing*. *Voyage Through Life* is another piece of blunt insensitive writing, but it achieves more. Concerned with the life of a woman who marries the wrong man, yet essentially trivial as a story, it creates the atmosphere of middle-class Scotland and the neighbourhood of Glasgow with a certain effectiveness. Grubby and second-rate as these three books are they are immeasurably superior to the washy sentimental guff of Mr. Nathan and the written-up newspaper gossip of Mr. Brinig. If second-rate English writing handles the coin of Latin thought in a clipped condition, second-rate American writing passes a plain base metal. Mr. Nathan's hero, for all his being drawn with the soft line of a pastel, is a blood brother to the grunting brute out of the tough novel and a far inferior being to the masked bandit from the most inferior Gothick novel of the eighteen thirties. He is almost as dumb as the lunatic of Mr. Brinig's book. Dull as the typical English novel of stuffy life inside the law usually is in its basic conceptions of right, wrong, and so on, it reflects more or less adult conventions of behaviour. These have a limited interest which makes them enthralling against the prattle of these unthinkable creatures who think " good " is something you feel when you catch your first trout of the day or get a new woman.

ANTHONY WEST

GOOD LETTERS

Admiral's Wife. By CECIL ASPINALL-OGLANDER. *Longmans.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

One of the most exhausting and disappointing of human experiences is a sentimental conversation across the Atlantic. Suppose that the telephone line is clear, you are tormented by a foreboding that it will suddenly grow indistinct, while the illusion of propinquity merely intensifies the pangs of separation. On the other hand, should it be bad—haunted by odd hummings and thrummings and roarings—you are convinced that the entire Atlantic ocean has entered into a conspiracy against your happiness. In either event, it is hard to say any of the things you had meant to say, difficult to remember any of the questions you had intended to ask: your voice grows blurry and anxious: you think in commonplaces. No, letter-writing as a means of intimate communication has never been improved on; and, had Mrs. Edward Boscawen in South Audley Street been able to ring up her husband in America or India, it is doubtful whether their relationship

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In each succeeding month books will be published embracing a wide variety of subjects—politics, foreign affairs, economics, history, social research, together with volumes of personal adventure and experience and works of fiction. In addition to the first four books listed on this page, arrangements have been made for the publication this year of new books by Leonard Woolf, Dr. Susan Isaacs and Mary Agnes Hamilton.

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THE FIRST 4 BOOKS

February.

THE POLITICS OF DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISM, by E. F. M. Durbin.

Professor R. H. Tawney writes: "Mr. Durbin argues his case with candour, knowledge and courage. He deals with fundamental issues boldly, without bluff or finesse. . . . His book remains (with one or two reservations) the most powerful and original of English works on Socialism which have appeared during the last decade. . . . Socialists—and not only Socialists—will do well to prepare themselves by studying the argument of the book." The book concludes by formulating a programme by which a future Socialist Government with a majority behind it can take a long step towards the attainment of its goal.

March.

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A GERMAN REBEL, by Toni Sender.

In his preface the Rt. Hon. Herbert Morrison, M.P., writes: "'The Autobiography of a German Rebel' is more than an autobiography, it is, I am inclined to think, the best study of post-war Germany from the Socialist point of view that I have read." Here is the life story of one of the most vital personalities in the German labour movement—a young and frail woman who fought the big bosses of German industry, faced the fury of the rising Nazis until she had to flee the country in disguise.

April.

THE RAPE OF THE MASSES: The Psychology of Totalitarian Propaganda, by Professor Serge Chakotin.

A brilliant study of propaganda by a distinguished scientist, an assistant of Professor Pavlov, and lecturer in the principal universities of Europe. Beginning with a study of the origin of the influence of propaganda, and a brief survey of propaganda in antiquity, Professor Chakotin then analyses the propaganda of the French and Russian Revolutions, and the Fascist propaganda of Mussolini and Hitler down to the present day, including an authentic account of the propaganda struggle in Germany prior to Hitler's accession to power.

May.

THE RUSSIAN ENIGMA, by Anton Ciliga.

Anton Ciliga, a Yugo-Slav communist, went to the U.S.S.R. in 1926 to study the revolution at first hand. In May 1930 he was arrested by the secret police, and the next five years he spent in prisons and concentration camps. This is an exciting book of personal adventure, and is, perhaps, one of the most impressive books on Soviet Russia that has yet been written. Ciliga retains his socialist faith, but he is profoundly critical of Stalin's regime; his description of prison life is comparable with Dostoevsky's "House of the Dead".

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would have been more harmonious. True, when Mrs. Boscawen composed a letter, almost a year might elapse before the Admiral received it. But, having adjusted her mind to the fact that they existed, so to speak, in different time-dimensions, she wrote in the same immediate style as if they had been exchanging notes by a messenger.

Her correspondence is distinguished by its spontaneity. Contemporary admirers were seldom at a loss for epithets with which to pin down their affection for "the attractive," "the agreeable," "the accomplished Mrs. Boscawen"; in France, she was described as "*la Sévigné d'Angleterre*"; and, in England, James Boswell remarked that, if his praise did not appear presumptuous, he "would say that her manners were the most agreeable, and her conversation the best, of any lady" with whom he had ever had the good fortune to be acquainted. A modern critic may find her characterisation not so easy. For, though Mrs. Boscawen was certainly an intelligent woman, she was far too unselfconscious—far too "nice"—to be really brilliant. Niceness—genuine niceness—was her greatest quality. Nature, of course, had assisted by depriving her of those obvious physical attractions that make a good looking woman's lot especially hard. She was spared the distractions and temptations that go with prettiness; without feeling that she had missed her *métier*, she remained an exemplary wife. She received the intermittent fervours of a sea-going husband with warmth and gratitude rather than in a spirit of calm complacency.

The present collection of her letters (hitherto largely unpublished and now strung together with the help of an introduction and connecting passages supplied by her descendant, General Aspinall-Oglander) covers the whole period of her marriage from 1746 to 1761. Apart from the pervasive charm of the writer's personality, they are worth reading because they illustrate an aspect of eighteenth-century social and domestic life that has not often been explored. Here is none of that elaborate, slightly whimsical, affectation of simplicity which Lady Suffolk, Lady Hervey and their friends considered the tip-top of epistolary good taste. We are also spared the touch of romantic effusiveness that came into vogue at the latter end of the century when mild hysteria seemed the only creditable mode of feeling. Mrs. Boscawen's style is as unpretentious as a mid-Georgian parsonage; and her references to celebrated books and eminent men and women are all the more interesting because they are unexpected. Thus, on the 29th January, 1748, she writes that she purposes to send the Admiral a copy of a diverting new book entitled *Roderick Random* (afterwards described as "the produce of a Scotch sea surgeon called Smollett" and voted somewhat tedious) and, in the next paragraph, remarks that "there is a thing much read, called *Clarissa*. . . . I hear 'tis by the author of *Pamela*," which she has not read herself or yet procured, "though I would be very sorry to omit sending you anything that had the least chance to amuse you for half an hour." Similarly, Allan Ramsay—that admirable portrait painter—figures, briefly and casually, as an old friend and Horace Walpole as a young dandy and man of fashion:

> Mr. Horace Walpole has for these two Sundays given most elegant entertainments at breakfast to the ladies, and has introduced a morning hop, which saves the expense of *bougies* and is not, I think, a bad scheme. As to the company, 'twill be sufficient to tell you that they were the *élite de la jeunesse*. Mr. Walpole himself danced with Lady Caroline Petersham.

But it is Mrs. Boscawen's personality that overflows the picture. This hard-featured, long-nosed, prim-looking woman (posed so stiffly in the portrait reproduced on the dust-jacket against a background of exotic vegetation) possessed the kind of unforced sweetness that is not often met with, particularly when it is accompanied by a shrewd and almost masculine understanding. Her letters are "good letters" in several senses of the phrase. They are extremely informative and must have been delightful to open and to re-read; and they have a continuous, though undeliberate, verbal charm, compact of affection, observation and direct intelligence. They abound in the splendid qualities of the Augustan heyday—its penetration, its delicacy, its classic common sense—before the creeping film of Romantic sentiment had obscured its brightness.

PETER QUENNELL

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MODERN FRENCH PAINTERS

Modern French Painters. By R. H. WILENSKI. *Faber.* 30s.

This is a book which everyone who cares for painting should read, which anyone seriously concerned with modern art must read. At the outset, therefore, it is desirable to remove, so far as possible, the impression which may be made on fastidious readers by the presentment. To such this may seem pretentious: it may seem affected to call the six chapters of which the book consists, Prologue, Acts I, II, III, Interlude, Act IV, and to call the people with whom the book chiefly deals Dramatis Personae. Exception may be taken also to the division of each chapter (except the one called Interlude) into three parts—Introduction, How it happened (scenes 1, 2, 3, etc.), and the lives of the masters during the period covered by the chapter; but I am willing to believe that this was the only way in which the author could achieve the task he had set himself. That task was, not only to give a critical account of French painting from 1863 to 1939, but to present it as a strand—if that be the word—in the ever-flowing stream of French civilisation. It was a task ambitious and fascinating; and, in my opinion, Mr. Wilenski has made a good job of it. He has failed only in the last chapter where, inevitably perhaps, he has been smothered by a plethora of material, with the result that the section "How it happened" becomes little more than a catalogue of names and titles. Also, no doubt, towards the end excitement flags because the two last decades of Parisian art have been, by comparison with what went before, disappointing. This fact may be accounted for by the holocaust of young talent and genius offered up between August 1914 and November 1918 in the war to end war: it remains a fact, which one cannot conceal though I fancy Mr. Wilenski would.

Each chapter—except the Interlude which covers the years of war—is prefaced by a critical essay; and in these essays, it seems to me, the author has improved vastly on his previous performances: it may be, of course, my understanding which has improved. I had always regarded Mr. Wilenski as a critic of the *a priori* school, as one who had a doctrine by conformity to which works of art were to be measured. And as, for my part, I find myself drawn more and more towards criticism based on the peculiar sensibility of the particular critic, as I care less and less for aesthetic theories and nothing at all for aesthetics with a lick of sociology and economics thrown in, I had expected to find Mr. Wilenski's essays clever and provocative, as they always are, but beside the

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point. To be sure, there are judgments which I can account for only by supposing that the critic's *a priori* hankerings woke up suddenly and asserted themselves. How else explain what seems to me a groundless admiration for Ozenfant and Chagall, and an excessive admiration for Gauguin? Gauguin was an interesting artist but surely not great: it is his importance in the history of modern painting which is that. And if one has taken Surrealism and the *Style Mécanique* under one's protection, I suppose one must make out a case for Chagall and Ozenfant. But, as a rule, Mr. Wilenski's criticism is not only intelligent but sensitive. I much admired his confrontation of Van Gogh's *Paysan hollandais* with Seurat's portrait of Aman-Jean. The former is exactly the picture which an up-to-date amateur, going into a gallery, would extol to the skies impetuously for vigour and directness, while the Seurat he (or she) would dismiss—had he or she omitted to consult the catalogue—as weak and commonplace. Mr. Wilenski points out how very wrong the amateur would be. His history and analysis of Cubism in Act III is, I believe, the best that has yet been done. And I should like to quote a few passages from his illuminating description of Cézanne's art because they will give, better than any comment of mine, a taste of his quality.

> Cézanne's aim, foreshadowed in *La route tournante*, was now more than ever to make his picture a microcosm of his experience of the architecture of the scenes which moved him to paint them; and by architecture he meant not only form but also colour, and by colour he meant local colour intensified or modified to suggest an equivalent of pervading light, without any attempts at imitating passing effects of light and shade. . . .
>
> From the end of the 'seventies Cézanne declined the use of this "atmospheric perspective" which he looked upon as a purely photographic procedure. He left it aside because he was not concerned to imitate the appearance of a scene in terms of transitory effects of light but to record his personal sensations in contact with the permanent characters of the scene itself. Cézanne's refusal to use atmospheric perspective was one of the things that made the understanding of his pictures extremely difficult for people taught by the Impressionists to expect and admire such perspective in landscapes. The dilettanti of this period, for example, could not realise that the distant hills in Cézanne's pictures were made definite in form and seemed locked to the foreground, not because Cézanne did not know how to make them appear hazy and distant but because he wanted to use them as a part of a dovetailed pictorial construction, and not as an agent for suggesting distance. . . .
>
> I reproduce his landscape sketch *La montagne Sainte-Victoire: Environs de Gardanne* (Pl. 20A) which shows his procedure when commencing a landscape; taking certain points in the foreground, the dip in the side of the road and the hill that rises at its turn, he states their character and position in relation to the points in the second plane (the shrub and tree), which are indicated in relation to the third plane (the green and brown earth and the houses with their red-violet roofs) which in their turn are stated in relation to the blue hills and mountains behind; every touch of colour, every line is thus a factor in the structure of the picture; and the white spaces in the reproduction, which represent *ban canvas*, are the parts of the structure which had not yet been decided upon—or as Cézanne himself always said "realised"—in relation to the others.

The section of each chapter which will be perused with most delight by the common reader is that which the author entitles "How it happened." Here it is that he attempts to give French painting its place in the stream of French civilisation. These pages are chock full of information nicely seasoned with pastime and prodigality. I had imagined that, except the painters themselves or their descendants or intimate friends, no one had much to tell me about the Impressionists and Post-Impressionists: yet on every other page Mr. Wilenski produces a surprise. I did not know that Cézanne was even said to have negro blood in his veins; and I should like more evidence. Also I should like to know exactly where Mr. Wilenski's tongue was when he wrote that "Gambetta shot himself by accident while cleaning his revolver," and whether he is quite sure that the charges brought against Clemenceau by Déroulède and others were altogether "wild." It is satisfactory to learn that in 1886 George Moore was as silly and obtuse in denunciation of Seurat as he was five-and-twenty years later in denunciation of Picasso. But it is humiliating to think that I did not know the Douanier had said to Picasso: "*Nous sommes les deux plus grands peintres de l'époque —toi dans le genre égyptien ; moi dans le genre moderne.*"

Mr. Wilenski's style is adequate though unappetizing. His book makes easy reading, notwithstanding that what he has to record is often subtle and hardly to be expressed in words. A certain awkwardness is soon forgotten by the reader, his attention absorbed in following an ingenious train of thought and a story that is always interesting and at times deliriously comic. In a second edition the author may care to correct two small slips that I have noted: page 230, Jean Copeau for Jacques Copeau; page 256, Lurçat stinted of his cedilla.

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The Art of Glass. THE WILFRID BUCKLEY COLLECTION. *Allen and Unwin*. 10s. 6d.

Optimists who doubt the power of insularity in this country, and imagine that at any rate in matters of art we share the general intellectual standpoint of Europe, would be disillusioned if they studied the history of glass collecting in England.

When the late Wilfrid Buckley began to collect, which was not very long ago, for he died comparatively young in 1933, English and "Irish" glass were much collected here, but the masterpieces of Venice, Holland and Germany were almost entirely neglected. So little, indeed, was known about the subject that in 1924 the late Mr. Kirkby Mason, a traveller, I believe, in hardware, and a man of genius in collecting, discovered a flask signed by the founder of the English art of glass, George Ravenscroft, in the British Museum, where it had till then been thought French. The art of Ravenscroft, who died in 1681, is indeed a connecting link between English and Continental glass; he might be called the last of the old "gentilhommes verriers," though his invention of the brilliant, heavy substance that we now think of as the typical material for decanters and wine-glasses, makes him also the pioneer of English "flint-glass," still distinguished in French as "*cristal*" as opposed to "*verre*." Buckley himself was one of the first collectors to appreciate Ravenscroft's importance, and he was also deeply interested in the experiments carried out at the British Museum, also about 1924, which proved that all English glass since Ravenscroft's day (except common bottles) contained lead, and could be clearly distinguished from late seventeenth and eighteenth century Continental glass by means of a simple chemical test. To most collectors, this test was chiefly thought of as a means of ejecting "aliens" from their shelves; Buckley was one of the few who perceived, what everyone knew abroad, that the glories of the art were due to Italy, Germany, and their cultural allies and

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dependants. In fact collecting in England before the war had been growing more and more insular in proportion as it became a middle-class and middle-brow hobby. Kipling seized on this aspect of it in one of his later short-stories, which cleverly establishes a connection between the collecting mentality of the day and freemasonry; but of course the *locus classicus* is H. A. Vachell's "Quinney" series. Buckley belonged by sympathy to another school of thought, and he found, in the early days of the Courtauld Institute, a favourable atmosphere there as well as in the Museums. His collection he bequeathed to the Victoria and Albert; his life-work (or rather, a small part of it, for he was a man of action as well as a collector) was a contribution to the cause of European humanism comparable to that of some of the great art-scholars who were his friends, of whom W. G. Constable was one and Mr. Rackham another.

The present volume, which illustrates almost every important piece in this collection, thus forming a complete history of the subject, is a worthy tribute to his memory, and a credit to the Phaidon Press. The 181 reproductions are magnificent, and the text is a scholarly summary of the relevant facts.

W. W. WINKWORTH

EDWARD BENEŠ

Beneš of Czechoslovakia. By GODFREY LIAS. *George Allen and Unwin.* 8s. 6d.

Few people can have had to suffer so much through the snobbery, complacency, ignorance and malice of others as Edward Beneš. His personality rarely attracts members of the British ruling class: his peculiar geometry of mind is alien to them. This quality, with the effects of the stern self-discipline of his early struggles, has made him seem frigid. He is usually a poor speaker and a bad writer, awkward and schematic. He has made many enemies by putting them in the wrong, confronting their instinctive wishes with a logical and documented case, based on principles to which they are committed. What is more, Beneš is identified with France's betrayed policy of Eastern alliances, a policy which until March, 1939, Great Britain disapproved and thwarted. His negotiating skill is dismissed as slickness or Machiavellian intrigue, his struggles with his own chauvinists are minimised or ignored, his real attempts to consolidate Central Europe are perfunctorily glossed over. And Mr. Lloyd George, in a passage which does more credit to his sense of timing than to the accuracy of his memory, has implied that at Versailles Beneš was crafty, hypocritical, short-sighted and grasping, and that such evils as have befallen him and his country were thoroughly deserved.

Mr. Lias's book goes a long way towards clearing up these misconceptions and misrepresentations. It is a straightforward account of Beneš's lifework, and of its destruction in September, 1938. The description of his student days in Paris, London and Berlin is especially interesting. In Berlin, in 1908, "Germany's display of armed strength overwhelmed him with its cannon-fodderish efficiency and . . . Prussian bureaucracy, the proud insolence of the Prussian military caste, the non-political and herd-like character of the lovable German people—all aroused in him a lively sense of a doom which was inevitable." From then until 1914 Beneš went quietly about his teaching in Prague, working "in a kind of moderate opposition" in Masaryk's Realist party. By August, 1914, he knew what he "could, would, and must do," as he writes in his Memoirs.

About Beneš's work during the war Mr. Lias, whose chief sources are Beneš's and Masaryk's memoirs, tells us nothing new. His account of the Peace Conference is ably done, and he brings out the extreme difficulties under which Beneš worked, hampered by his colleague, Kramař, attacked by chauvinists at home, struggling often with inadequate information. As Mr. Lias shows, Beneš *gave his written consent* to the transfer of several districts in North and West Bohemia to Germany. This proposal, which would have excluded about three-quarters of a million Germans from Czechoslovakia, was vetoed by the Big Four. So much for Mr. Lloyd George.

The account of Munich is, surprisingly, unsatisfactory. Nowhere does Mr. Lias mention the dominating reason for Beneš's acceptance of the Anglo-French ultimatum—fear that there would be an anti-Bolshevik crusade against Czechoslovakia if she fought alone or with Russian help; fear that Britain and France would non-intervene against her, as against Republican Spain. And after Godesberg Rumania was *not* "discreetly waiting." Rumania throughout 1938 gave her ally unqualified support, setting an example to the whole of Europe.

There are various minor inaccuracies—the notorious *Times* leader appeared on September 7th, not 6th, the "Fourth Plan" was published on September 6th, not 10th, and Beneš's great speech on it was made on September 11th, not 10th. There is also no reason to suppose that the Czechoslovak note of September 25th was composed by Beneš and not by its signatory, Jan Masaryk. But this is a good and truthful book. It ought to be distributed in thousands by some intelligent millionaire.

JOAN GRIFFIN

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The Music Review. Vol. I, No. 1. *W. Heffer and Sons.* 4s.

Who could have guessed that the first year of the war would produce not only a new literary monthly but a new musical quarterly? *The Music Review* is edited by Geoffrey Sharp and published, very attractively, by Messrs. Heffer, of Cambridge; no one need cavil at its price in view of the abundant illustrations in music-type, without which a serious publication of this sort is useless. Hitherto Mr. Blom's admirable *Music and Letters* (5s.) has had the English field to itself; it is to be hoped that there is a public to support both reviews, for Mr. Sharp's first number promises well. Dr. Egon Wellesz discusses the symphonies of Mahler, a good subject about which he knows as much as any man; like all Mahler initiates he weakens his case by appearing to admire equally everything his hero did; though less vague than M. Bruno Walter, he still fails to answer the difficulties felt by the average musician who investigates Mahler's scores. The question that puzzles us is not, as Dr. Wellesz curiously supposes, "Why ten symphonies?" but "Why, granted that much of this music is original and beautiful, such enormous, unmanageable dimensions?" If only the out-and-out Mahlerites and Brucknerites would get to grips with that problem! Cecil Gray contributes an entertaining study of Pietro Raimondi, a fantastic and forgotten master of the Neapolitan school, whose skill in counterpoint was so fabulous that he produced (in 1852) a trinity of oratorios, *Potiphar*, *Joseph* and *Jacob*, intended to be performed first independently on three successive evenings, and then *all three simultaneously* on the fourth. Indeed they actually were so given, and with overwhelming effect: the audience (a non-intellectual Italian audience, be it remembered, of the mid-Verdi period) was profoundly moved and wildly enthusiastic, and the elderly composer fainted. Since then his Leviathan has fallen into complete oblivion, and a dual opera on the same lines (comedy and tragedy in adjacent rooms) has never seen the light at all. The distinguished scholar, Otto Erich Deutsch writes, rather dryly, but with some fresh information, about Schubert's *Unfinished Symphony*, while Paul Hirsch lists "Some Early Mozart

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SHEED AND WARD

Editions " in his famous library. Finally there is a brief essay by Mr. Turner on " Artistic Direction," and an enthusiastic programme note from the Editor on Bloch's *Violin Concerto*. It is a pity that he should have dragged into this a contemptuous reference to " The Brittens, Rawsthornes and Berkeleys of the contemporary scene " ; none of these composers is negligible, and the inclusion of Britten, whose *Variations* and recent song-cycle, *Les Illuminations*, have consolidated his position as the most inventive, musical and uninhibited of the younger generation, is particularly unfortunate.

Remembering the Champs-Elysées. By SACHA GUITRY. Translated by JOHN MARKS. *Hutchinson.* 6*s.*

M. Guitry's monologues seem to go equally well into print or celluloid. True, when we read, we miss the conjurer's flourish with which he makes his multiple appearances on the screen, but the anecdote is there, told with the same plausibility and charm. *Remembering the Champs-Elysées* is something more than a " book of the film " ; even if there had been no film, so lively a piece of invention would have found readers. An old schoolmaster breaks off the arithmetic hour to sketch a history round the Champs-Elysées, traces his family back to Louis XV, with the Emperor Napoleon, a *tricoteuse* of the Revolution and perhaps (delightful touch !) a President of the Republic thrown in. It has been the destiny of each male descendant of this line to beget a son at the age of fifty-four and to die ten years later. In the longest and liveliest of the episodes we see Louis XV pursuing mistresses, trying to resist the prophecy that he will only outlive his friend Chauvelin by six months, annexing Corsica, dying finally of smallpox in the bustle of an impatient court. These scenes are the highlights, and M. Guitry gives them just enough detail and just the right touch of paradox. At times we are left wondering which is the more improbable, historical fact or the preposterous family story attached to it. Most history intended for the films would not bear reading in cold blood ; *Remembering the Champs-Elysées* is the exception, and everyone who cannot make the journey to the Academy (where the film is still running) should buy a copy of the book. It has been excellently translated by Mr. John Marks.

The Silent Traveller in War Time. By CHIANG YEE. *Country Life.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

This is the third of Mr. Chiang Yee's travels in England, which he writes and illustrates himself. He began, a couple of years ago, with a tour of the Lake District : his impressions of wartime London lack the freshness and surprise of the earlier volume. The illustrations especially are disappointing, and the cartoons of public figures (Mr. Chamberlain as the God with the Magic Umbrella, etc.) are the most tawdry *chinoiserie*. However, there are compensations. The early days of the war, when a sand-bagged London was enjoying the late sunshine, produced some curious sights. Walking in St. James's Park, Mr. Yee noticed, among the usual picnickers who had brought their gas-masks, one man asleep under a tree with his gas-mask on. The scene makes a delightful frontispiece. Mr. Yee has an eye for such backwaters, and in wartime discovers them in the parks, the crowds going home at sunset, moonlight nights in the black-out and the balloon barrage. His anecdotes as a rule are better than his reflections (he has seen war spread from his own country), but even when he writes a little flatly, one can't help liking so modest and unassuming an observer.

A Hundred Years of Economic Development. By G. P. JONES and A. G. POOL. *Duckworth.* 18*s.*

This is a thoroughly competent outline of British economic history since 1840, based largely on Professor Clapham's monumental three volumes, but drawing also on a wide range of sources, original and secondary. It is well arranged, clearly written, and firm in its grasp of the essential lines of development. It has a good bibliography, which would have been better if some of the titles had not been incorrectly quoted, and if students had been given some help in choosing among the very large number of books mentioned. The mystery is why the publisher should have chosen to defeat the apparent purpose of the volume by pricing it at 18*s.* Very suitable in other respects to be used as a textbook by students both in Universities and in the top forms of schools, it is condemned by its high price to be bought mainly by libraries, and to forfeit the chance of the wide sale which it deserves.

BOOKS TO COME

Whilst the prices of new books are rising, publishers are doing their best to meet the needs of the serious and impoverished reader by the introduction of new series of cheap editions. Cape announces the St. Giles's Library (30 Bedford Square is in the parish of St. Giles), a series of reprints but priced at only 1*s.* 9*d.* a volume and bound in calf. There will be 40 titles representing fiction, travel and adventure, biography and literature of which the first ten will be published on February 23rd. They will include Gertrude Bell's *Persian Pictures*, *Selected Essays* by Samuel Butler, *The Bazaar* by Martin Armstrong, and *Northanger Abbey*.

Dr. Carl Burckhardt's study of *Richelieu*, which has been held up for some time owing to its author's public activities, is coming from Allen and Unwin on February 27th. Dr. Burckhardt sees Richelieu as the creator of nationalism and the forerunner of the modern " leader."

Allen and Unwin publish on the same day Mr. Phillips Price M.P.'s study of *Hitler's War and Eastern Europe* and *The German People Versus Hitler*, an interpretation of Hitlerism and an account of the underground opposition in Germany by Heinrich Fraenkel, one of Hitler's most active German opponents, now in Britain.

A new Stephen Leacock, *Too Much College*, is due from the Bodley Head on February 27th. It is a serious criticism of contemporary educational method based on the theory that the modern curriculum of school and college has been so lengthened that it is eating up life. Nowadays, says Professor Leacock, students emerge from college " thirty years old, timid in the daylight, shuddering at life, having lived thirty years on other people's money."

Cedric Belfrage, the escapologist, has a new book, *Let My People Go*, coming from Gollancz on February 29th. It is a biography of Claude Williams, a fundamentalist parson in the United States who was converted to militant Socialism.

Of No Importance, by Rom Landau, coming from Nicholson and Watson on February 29th, takes the form of a diary covering the period just before and after the war. It is a study of the transition period when the individual citizen began to be transformed into a member of a nation at war.

On February 26 Hale will publish *Arctic Lights*, by Desmond Holdridge, the story of an expedition with two companions to the coast of Labrador in a thirty-foot sloop, undertaken when the explorer was less than twenty-one. For nearly six months the three travellers lived together in a space nine feet long by eight feet wide and five feet deep.

Hurst and Blackett will shortly publish *Home is the Sailor*, by William Blain, the life story of William Brown, Master Mariner and Penang Pilot who in 1914 pursued the *Emden* out of Penang, after her fight with the *Jemtchug*, in a pilot launch.

Fabers announce for February 29th a volume of new poems by George Barker—*Lament and Triumph*.

An account by W. P. and Z. Coates of the negotiations between the Soviet Union and the Baltic States including Finland, together with the terms of the treaties both signed and proposed, will be published by Lawrence and Wishart on February 22nd under the title *Russia, Finland and the Baltic*.

For February 28th this firm announces *Culture and the People*, by Maxim Gorki, a selection of Gorki's journalistic work during the last year of his life ; and a translation by C. P. Dutt of Frederick Engels's *Dialectics of Nature*.

MARIE SCOTT-JAMES

About Motoring

THE 1940 CAR MARKET IN AMERICA

IF the united tailors of Great Britain held an annual exhibition of new styles in masculine wear, the attendance would assuredly be small. (Possibly, they actually hold such a show, and the attendance actually is meagre ?) Male Britons regard their clothes as mere utilities, and refuse to generate excitement about the cut of a lapel or the number of vest buttons. Even if inventors produced an everlasting fabric combining drencherproof qualities with adequate ventilation and the elimination of creasing and a weight reduction comparable to that of feminine rayon undies, or if Royalty contrived to popularise purple shorts instead of pinstripe trousers, most men would contentedly wait till the local outfitter staged a window show. American motorists similarly regard motor cars. There were only nineteen makes at the autumn New York Show, and the vast bulk of American cars emerge from no more than half a dozen factories, and evince a close family resemblance. Nevertheless, tendencies in the American industry are of special importance to us Britons just now. At present only three nations are piling up major war debts, debts which are destined to make huge additions to the " overhead " element of manufacturing costs when peace returns. The cost of any British, German or French post-war motor car will be swollen by taxation due to war ; and these inflated " overheads " will furnish the motor industries of Italy and America with a mighty vantage in all export markets after the war, unless these vantages are nullified by high tariffs.

However, the current Show betrays no novelties of great value or of universal interest. In the absence of innovations, it would seem that apart from the effect of war debts, our main handicap in competing with post-war American exports will be the increased h.p. tax. All the Dominions prefer roomy high-powered cars. The 25*s.* h.p. tax prevents British makers from attaining large-scale production of high-powered cars. Therefore we cannot build such cars cheaply for export ; and it follows we cannot compete with the American maker, who enjoys such a colossal home demand for high-powered cars in a huge country where motor taxation remains extremely light. Of the two principal novelties, one is of dubious value, and the other has real attractions. The former consists of a sealed headlamp, which must be replaced

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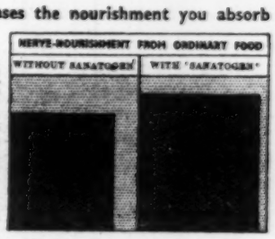

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by a complete new lamp if the bulb filament fails. The idea is that the interior of the lamp remains flawlessly clean throughout its working life, and its focus cannot be maladjusted. The unit is cheap, as it is sunk in a wing or valance, and bears no resemblance to a large silver-plated salad bowl; nothing shows except the front glass, which is backed by a cheap light bowl-shaped pressing. The other innovation is an improvement on the fluid flywheel and epicyclic gear rendered famous over here by Daimler and Lanchester. The American addition consists of a genuinely automatic gear change, evolved by General Motors, constructed in a special £500,000 plant, and adding some £15 to the cost of the car—it is still listed as an option. The gears are changed automatically, both on the level and against a grade, by mechanism actuated through the load and the speed. The mechanism is apparently both efficient and flexible. The flashy type of driver starts his engine, and presses his accelerator hard down. Without any further action on his part, first gear will give way to second at round about 15 m.p.h.; at 35 m.p.h. third gear will replace second; and at 60 m.p.h. top gear will snick home. If, however, a more sedate driver is in control, the throttle will be opened less violently, and the gear changes will automatically occur at lower road speeds, top being engaged at 25 m.p.h. or even less. This gadget will possess very obvious attractions for the lazy type of driver. Its cost would be considerably higher if applied to the comparatively small outputs attained by most British factories; but would gladly be paid by the kind of owner who regards his car simply as a means of transport, and does not view it as a hobby—who, in the American phrase, is "no auto fan"!

Two-speed windscreen wipers are assets in a country afflicted by heavy snow in the winter months, but are in no sense necessary over here. Interior car heating, coupled with air-conditioning, is a desirable luxury in any land. In the States it is rendered almost essential by low winter temperatures. In Britain it is seldom required to keep the occupants warm, but is always desirable because it reduces or prevents misting of the glass surfaces of the body, and so makes for convenience and safety in driving, especially after dark. In America it tends to become standard on all but the lowest priced cars. Here it is a somewhat costly extra, denied to the buyer of cheap mass-produced vehicles. Independent front wheel springing and hydraulic brakes continue to gain ground, and really capacious luggage accommodation is increasingly popular, as indeed it should be. One rather peculiar exhibit staged a Nash car, standing steadily on an even keel with one of its front wheels completely removed! It does not necessarily follow that similar stability can be guaranteed if a stub axle snapped clean off when the car was in fast motion on an uneven surface.

American cars can hardly be said to be growing in beauty, and their preference for an aggressive type of "nose," or bonnet, comparable to a railway locomotive minus its funnel is hard to justify. It imparts to the car an aggressive appearance, difficult to harmonise with democratic ideas. Radio equipment remains as popular as ever. The task of endowing the stern lines of a car with contours merging artistically into the general outline is being facilitated by the use of a special workable glass in the rear windows, which are less universally flat than was the custom; this permits the builder to employ a rounded tail devoid of the usual flat panel and simultaneously to retain a really serviceable stern window devoid of frame divisions. There is no sign of a rounded pillarless transparent front screen, constructed of similar moulded or plastic material.

On the whole, indications of copying European notions are perhaps more evident than tokens of originality. Apart from the bonnets, lines are largely European, and even the sliding roof, which America has not previously appreciated, is beginning to make its appearance. Engines and minor mechanical components evince no important changes. R. E. DAVIDSON

Week-end Competitions

No. 523

Set by Thomas Smallbones

The usual prizes of Two guineas and half a guinea are offered for a four-line rhyming epitaph on any regular contributor to the NEW STATESMAN & NATION.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Friday, February 23rd.

2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.

3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.

4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The result of last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 521

Set by Mary Nicholson

A bomb has exploded near you and, although physically uninjured, you have lost your memory. No papers are found on you, except a small pocket diary, without name or address, but with entries up to Jan. 13th. The usual prizes are offered for a diary (not more than 250 words) which would be particularly useful to you in establishing what kind of a person you are.

Report by Mary Nicholson

The sight of a pile of entries for this competition encouraged me; but when I came to read them my heart sank. I tried sorting them out into groups. The largest group gave records of a monotonous domestic round. This can be (as anyone who has read E. M. Delafield knows) a wonderful framework for astute revelation of character. But to my horror the character of all these competitors was the same. As you came round in the white hospital bed you could not possibly have told *which one of them you were.*

Moreover, besides being dull, many of them were extremely unrealistic. Even a person who had lost his memory would find it hard to believe that some of them had been written by an actual human being. He would get no help in his awkward situation from reading the diary—he would simply think he was being had on by someone.

The proletarian group were particularly bad in this way. They were trying of course something that is particularly difficult to bring off. But I think not impossible. Nobody, however, brought it off; the diaries simply did not carry conviction. I can't imagine a window-cleaner saying "hurrah," let alone writing it down; and surely a hardened taxi driver has seen enough love going on in the driving mirror to have finished getting a kick out of it.

I found myself pleased to be reading any diary which sounded at all like a real person. But as soon as I imagined myself reading any particular one after the bombshell, I found in it very little guidance as to what commitments I had made for myself, or how I generally behaved. For instance, one entry came from the kind of man who shoots his neighbour's cat; but, the cat being now shot, the problem arises, how to go on from there. And in the diary you find no answer. Another competitor is faced with a breach of promise action, but beyond his susceptibility to blonde chorus girls there is nothing more to him. Which, however low your opinion of human nature, is impossible.

A limit of 250 words does of course make it difficult to give more than a few cartoon-like strokes to suggest character; but these entries had not the suggestive force of a cartoon. With regret, therefore, I decided to recommend that only one prize of a guinea should be awarded, and that this should go to Miss Lucie Milner.

PRIZE

1st Jan.: Can't think why Jack chose Bog End or why he had to join up. There are plenty of other men.

2nd Jan.: Bored! No men here. No Cinema.

3rd Jan.: Depressed! Nobody plays Bridge.

4th Jan.: Desperate! Click of needles gets on my nerves.

5th Jan.: Ration cards a nuisance. Love heaps of butter. Plenty of margarine for the lower classes.

6th Jan.: Curate's wife told me to collect old tins and paper. Gave her bundle Jack's letters.

7th Jan.: Aunt Anne suggested coming here. Couldn't bear it.

8th Jan.: Turn on wireless. All about Finns being bombed. Can't help it if they are. Turn it off.

9th Jan.: Landlady seems cheerful. Can't think why. Asked her. Said "Because I don't sit round all day thinking about myself like some." Disagreeable woman! Wish she wouldn't hum!

10th Jan.: Vicar asked me help clothes for refugee children. Detest children. Gave him 1s. Got Paquin's bill. Sent it on to Jack. Can't wear clothes here.

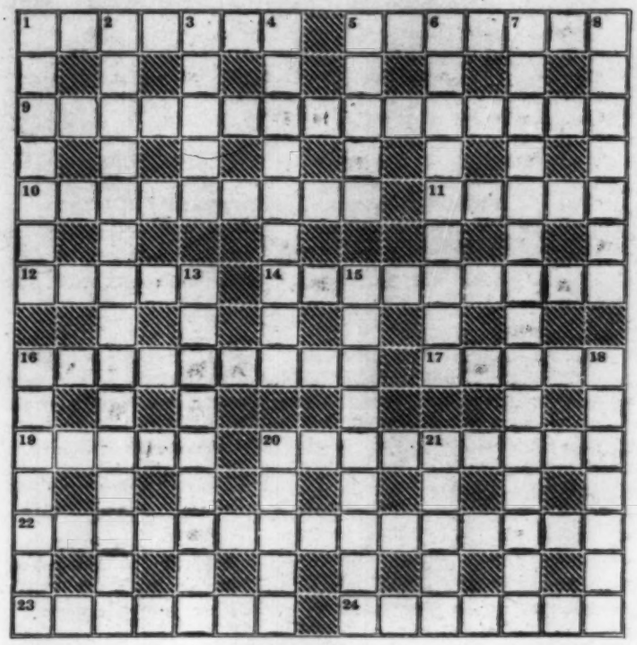
11th Jan.: Nerves! Went see local doctor. Brusque man. Said "Take more exercise." Asked him where I could get permanent wave. He pointed towards sea.

12th Jan.: As I gaze into the fire seem to remember many things . . . Perhaps she's right. Perhaps I do only think of myself. Perhaps I've always been like that. Maybe I'll go out and collect some rags and paper and learn to knit and get some old tin cans for the refugees. Maybe I'll. . . .

13th Jan.: "Goodbye! Stick to me, darling," he said when he went. Of course I'll stick to Jack. Who else on earth would put up with me? LUCIE MILNER

WEEK-END CROSSWORD 519

Books to the value of Five Shillings may be chosen by the sender of the first correct solution opened. Post solutions to arrive not later than first delivery Wednesday following the date of issue, addressed to "CROSSWORDS," 10 Great Turnstile, London, W.C.1.



Set by L.-S.

The last week's winner is

C. R. Smith, Ardfardach, Bridge of Allan

ACROSS

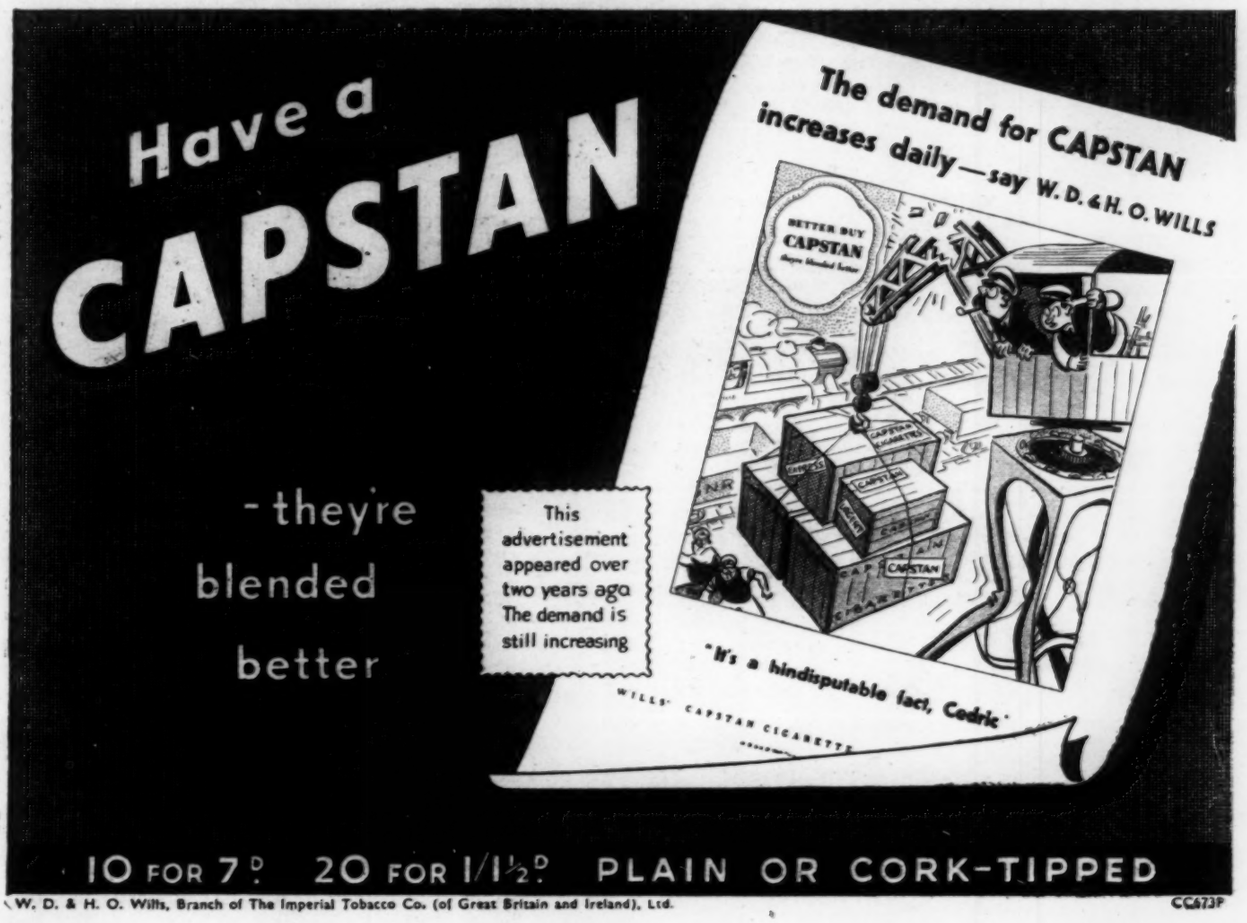
1. A likely sort of word. (7)
5. Graduates indeed! (7)
9. Seat for climbers? (15)
10. These are not made by gentle stroking. (9)
11. Printer's pie in dominion. (5)
12. Of any nationality when on the street. (5)
14. Full faced, florally speaking. (9)
16. Helps to keep the leg covered up. (9)
17 (rev.). They often wire the papers. (5)
19. Needlewoman's quick reverse of a comedown. (5)
20. Results of amalgamating cocks. (9)
22. Practice of spending unofficeal days as guests. (15)
23. Stops in the side streets. (7)
24. How one used to be privately coached. (7)

DOWN

1. An isle is a change from this. (7)
2. They partly performed before Queen Elizabeth. (15)
3. Bloodthirsty creature. (5)
4. Hawk's headdress for a smaller bird. (9)
5. They provide a walkover for sailors. (5)
6. Footwork in a rearguard action? (9)
7. Mostly a matter of getting heads on paper. (15)
8. Drums at the tree. (7)
13. Where woollen goods in the raw are folded up, so to speak. (9)
15. Unearths its breakfast. (9)
16. Turned in as it were. (7)
18. Philistine anglers' deity? (7)
20. Spirited air-raid refuge? (5)
21 (rev.). How Don Quixote addressed the windmill. (5)

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD

F	■	Y	■	L	■	H	E	A	D	A	C	H	E	S
O	X	A	L	I	C	■	A	■	W	■	A	■	V	■
O	■	R	■	N	■	D	R	I	E	D	P	E	A	S
D	O	D	D	E	R	■	L	■	L	■	I	■	D	■
S	■	S	■	A	I	R	Y	■	L	A	T	T	E	R
T	U	T	O	R	S	■	V	I	S	T	A	■	D	■
U	■	I	■	■	E	■	I	■	■	O	■	H	■	O
F	A	C	T	O	R	Y	C	H	I	M	N	E	Y	S
F	■	K	■	N	■	■	T	■	S	■	■	A	■	T
■	P	■	B	R	U	N	O	■	L	A	D	D	I	E
B	A	N	Y	A	N	■	R	O	E	S	■	L	■	O
■	L	■	L	■	F	■	I	■	S	H	R	I	M	P
C	A	T	A	M	A	R	A	N	■	P	■	N	■	A
■	C	■	N	■	I	■	N	■	S	I	L	E	N	T
H	E	A	D	D	R	E	S	S	■	T	■	S	■	H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THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By CYNICUS

SECOND THOUGHTS ON HOME RAILWAYS—LIMITS OF THE MARKET RISE—L.P.T.B. "C" STOCK

NON-STOP runs and crowded traffics in the home railway market made even the most liverish of stockbrokers accept the lateness of their morning trains with equanimity. Naturally, the steep advance has met with profit-taking and has induced the institutional investors, who have been waiting many years to sell, to part with their holdings too soon. But I would not be frightened out of the market by Mr. Herbert Morrison who, in the Parliamentary debate, gave the figure of £100 millions as the increase in the capital value of home railway stocks (of which £1,200 millions are outstanding). It does not seem to be a large figure, but it is wrong for Mr. Morrison to argue that the Government had "*presented*" this sum to the railway companies as a result of the agreement. Since 1938 the market value of railway stocks must have fallen by over £400 millions as the result of selling on the part of holders who had been depressed and frightened by the unfair trading conditions to which their companies had been exposed. The existing holders of railway stocks are merely seeing part of their paper losses being wiped out *on paper*. Of course, some speculative investors (including, I hope, some readers of this page) jumped into the market to buy the stocks which had been unduly depressed by the 1938/39 selling and they are quite entitled to enrich themselves out of the folly of the market, but their profits, can be counted in tens of thousands, not in millions. And why, Mr. Morrison, should companies not have the *right* to earn higher profits and dividends as a result of the war, *provided the profits are not excessive* and provided they are subject to Excess Profits Tax? The railways are not even likely to earn the percentages allowed under the E.P.T. law on their total issued capital. No, this railway agreement is a fair one, far more fair and sensible than that reached in the last war.

* * *

Let us now contemplate the rise which has taken place in the junior railway stocks from the strictly professional point of view of investors. Is it adequate to the occasion or is there a further rise to come? We must first lay down certain principles of valuation. If the debenture and well-covered guaranteed stocks are to be valued, as they should be, on a yield basis 10*s.* to 20*s.* above that of irredeemable gilt-edged stocks, that is, if we assume that the senior stocks are fairly priced to yield 4 per cent. to 4½ per cent., then the preference stocks should be yielding from under 5 per cent. to 5½ per cent., or, if they are the marginal ones which in the worst years of depression received nothing, from 6 per cent. to 6½ per cent. Let us see how this test works out. The dividends on the following stocks are all covered by the minimum revenues guaranteed by the Government for the duration of the war. Those marked by an asterisk did not receive their full dividends in the depression:

	High 1938	Low Price 1939	To-day	Yield %	Potential Price	To Yield
L.M.S. 4% 1st pf. (*a*)*	82½	37½	69½	5.76	76½	5½%
„ 4% (1923) pf. (*b*)*	70½	20	58½	6.84	66⅝	6%
L.N.E. 4% 2nd G'teed	91½	47	76	5.26	80	5%
„ 4% 1st pf. (*c*)*	68½	19	57	7.02	66⅝	6%
G.W. 5% pref.	118¾	71	102½	4.89	105½	4¾%
Southern 5% pref.	116	76	103	4.85	105½	4¾%
„ 5% pf. ord. (*d*)*	87	46½	77	6.49	83⅜	6%

(*a*) 3 per cent. in 1932 and 3½ per cent. in 1933.
(*b*) Nil in 1932, 1933 and 1938. In 1934 1.625 per cent.
(*c*) 1% in 1932, 2% in 1933, 3½% in 1934/35 and nil in 1938.
(*d*) 4% in 1931, 1% in 1932, 3% in 1933 and 4% in 1934.

The prices in the last column are tentatively put forward as the level to which the market, if it retains its bullishness, may go. But the prudent investor may be well advised to sell before that level is reached.

* * *

A valuation of the railway equity stocks is more difficult. First compare the earnings at the stage (*a*) of the guaranteed minimum (£41 millions including the outside investment income) plus the additional £3½ millions allowed (which is the amount probably now being earned) and at the stage (*b*) of the maximum allowed to each company (i.e., up to its standard revenues) in the 50/50 profit-sharing period.

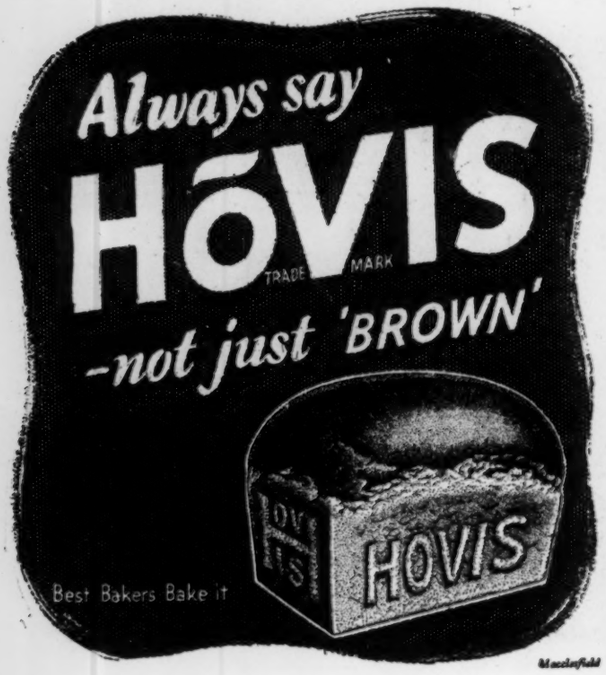
It is necessary to bear in mind that in this 50/50 profit-sharing period (when the "pool" earnings can rise from £44½ millions to £69¾ millions) each company stops drawing from the pool when its retained half share brings its total net revenues up to its "standard," which we may call its maximum. Any company's earnings additional to its "standard" are divided among those which have not yet reached their standard. It will be found that Southern reach their maximum first and very quickly, then after a big rise in the pool earnings (to £60 millions) Great Western, then L.M. & S. and finally L. & N.E. This does not mean that Southern deferred, being a safer or less marginal equity, should be valued on a lower yield basis than the others, for it has less scope for capital appreciation. Comparing maximum earnings with the present earnings [stage (*a*)], it stands out that L.M. & S. have the biggest potential rise (if we omit L. & N.E. deferred, which may earn a maximum of 5 per cent. against nothing). The next table gives to-day's prices for these equity stocks and the potential earnings yields:

	High 1938	Prices Low 1939	To-day	Stage (*a*)	Earnings Yield % Maximum
L.M.S. ord.	30½	9½	21	10.95	38.57 on 8.1%
L.N.E. 2nd pref.	27½	7½	20¾	12.27	19.63 on 4%
L.N.E. pref. ord.	8 9/16	3	7¾	Nil	64.52 on 5%
G.W. ord.	65½	21½	48	9.58	16.87 on 8.1%
Southern def. ord.	21¾	7	19½	13.84	16.41 on 3.2%

The wise speculative investor would expect a 10 per cent. to 12 per cent. earnings yield on these highly speculative stocks.

* * *

While speculative buying is restoring life and activity to the home railway equity stocks, the London Passenger Board equity, that is the C stock, is without a market at all. For some extraordinary reason, known only to the Treasury, the minimum price of 65 has never been removed from this unfortunate stock. The London Passenger Transport Board, which is included in the railway pool, is deemed to have reached its standard when the "C" stock has earned 5½ per cent. This will be attained when the "pool's" revenues have touched £54.1 millions, which is about half-way between the Southern and Great Western maximum points. For the year ending June, 1939, the "C" stock only earned 1½ per cent., which is the minimum guaranteed under the compensation settlement. It is now earning (under stage *a*) about 3.1 per cent., and it has 5½ per cent. to hope for, yet there is no free market in which this prospect can be valued. What is the point in "freezing" this stock? Is the Treasury being sentimental? Is it pretending that a Public Board stock, which was issued to the public on a potential 5½ per cent. dividend, has a special sanctity which a free market must not be allowed to violate? Or is it being merely silly? If a free market were allowed I would suggest that London Transport "C" stock should find its level between the prices of L. & N.E. second preference and Great Western ordinary, let us say, between 35 to 40.



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